Contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education: A Case Study

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Contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

There is a shortage of African American male educators in the United States (Delpit, 2006). This underrepresentation occurred as a result of the significant case, *Brown vs. Board of Education (1954)*, which permitted the integration of schools for all (Howard & Milner, 2004). Although this integration was applauded, it resulted in a decline of African American teachers (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011). Today, the Black male teacher-student ratio is 1:534, but there is one White female teacher for every five students (Toldson, 2010). Changes are necessary to increase African American male teacher representation in public school.

This case study research (Yin, 2014) was conducted to present the journey of eight experienced teachers and three administrators of the New York City Department of Education to understand their school experiences and teaching to gain perspectives about supports and barriers for African American males in the profession. This case used a cross case analysis approach to compare the teachers and administrators thematically coded responses to the semi-structured interview questions.

The study used a qualitative research approach to construct meaning from both teachers' and administrators' experiences. The researcher gathered information to determine the connections between the participants' experiences and their views of African American males as educators (Lapan, Quartaroli, & Riemer, 2012). To obtain information, the qualitative data was collected with face-to-face interviews, which allowed researcher to ask questions while gaining insight through reflections of the participants' experiences (Lapan et al., 2012).

The 11 participants interviewed provided detailed descriptions of their experiences. By coding the interview data, emergent themes were generated. In general, the belief from both teachers and administrators is that for there to be an increase in African American male

educators, it is necessary to make the education field more attractive to them by providing them with equitable compensation, incorporating additional support in college preparation courses, increasing collaborative measures from university programs to diversify and improve teacher education programs, and creating mentor opportunities for struggling teachers to receive support outside of the classroom.

Findings showed African American male teachers and administrators faced many barriers in education. Participants discussed the African American male student experience, including the disproportionate placement in special education (Harry & Anderson, 1994), high expulsion rates and increasing gaps in academic achievements as factors contributing to the negative experiences African American males encounter in school.

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"If any man lacks wisdom let him ask and I will give it to him."

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

"Without God I would be nothing."

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The structure of public schools was different nearly six decades ago (McBride, 2006). African American students were educated in separate facilities from their White counterparts. The *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) Supreme Court case ruled it constitutional to maintain two separate school systems as long as the facilities were "separate but equal" (McBride, 2006). This system however left African American students in overcrowded, understaffed schools with limited materials to foster learning (Howard & Milner, 2004).

Traditionally, teaching was one of the major occupations of Black Americans. In 1950, over half of professionals in the United States were Black (Cole, 1986). Years after, another significant case, *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954), led to the overturning of the initial *Plessy* ruling and permitted the integration of schools for all (Howard & Milner, 2004). After this ruling there were many changes with Black teachers and students. Despite its significance in U.S. history, integration had negative impacts on the African American community (Howard & Milner, 2004). In 1954 there were over 82,000 African American educators. Between 1954 and 1965, approximately 38,000 African American educators lost their positions in schools (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011). As integration was applauded, the decline in African American teachers left negative impacts that swept across the country causing a loss of African American teachers, particularly African American male teachers (Howard & Milner, 2004).

The underrepresentation of African American males in the teaching profession reduces the chances that African American students will encounter positive role models who resemble them in the classroom setting (Delpit, 2006). Currently, in K-12 public schools African American students have primarily White, female, middle class teachers (Delpit, 2006). In the 2015-2016 school year, there was an estimated 3,827,100 public elementary and secondary

school teachers in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). Of this number, 80% were non-Hispanic white and 7% were non-Hispanic and Black. Among these teachers, 77% were female and 23% were male (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017).

The Black male teacher-student ratio is 1:534, but there is one White female teacher for every five students (Toldson, 2010). When comparing the statistics in 2011, White teachers far exceeded their counterparts with the overall percentage of 80% White, 9.6% Black, 7.4% Hispanic, 2.3% Asian, and 1.2% of other races (Toldson, 2010). As the Black student population rises, one dire need is to increase the presence of experienced Black educators (Lewis & Sealey-Ruiz, 2011), from similar cultural backgrounds in order to improve their educational experience and, consequently, their school performance (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011).

Highly qualified Black teachers can make cultural connections with Black students because they can understand the lives of the students they are teaching (Farinde, Allen & Lewis, 2016). However, this connection is happening less frequently due to the decreasing amount of African American male educators in the public school system (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011). This case study research presents the journey of eight experienced past and present teachers of the NYC Department of Education, three of which left teaching to start an education technology company, three past and present administrators of the NYC Department of Education, one who left to start an educational consulting firm. Two others are currently practicing administrators on different levels, one works in the Central Office within the New York City Department of Education while the other works as a full time principal for High School in Brooklyn, NY. This study investigated their experiences as qualified Black teachers, discussed their experiences growing up in school, the reasons they chose to pursue careers in education and asked them to consider possible ways to increase the rate of Black males entering and remaining in the

education field. Seeking out possible ways to improve the African American male experience in the public school system and improving the cultural connections by allowing them to see positive role models that look like them is an important area of ongoing research.

Exploring ways to provide African American male educators with support for success can provide valuable information on ways to make the teaching profession more marketable to other African American males. Exploring reasons for African American males remaining and leaving teaching for better opportunities can provide valuable information on ways to make the teaching profession more marketable to other males. This case study relied on qualitative data sources. The qualitative data relied on interviews, specifically aimed at targeting childhood experiences with teachers to highlight the participant's reasons for entering the profession and their experiences with colleagues while teaching. Self-Determination Theory was used to frame this study, specifically intrinsic motivation that drives the educators to remain in the education profession. Critical Race Theory (CRT) was also used as a way to frame the purpose for conducting the research, which includes ways public schools can enhance the experiences African American male teachers have in the employment process. This study also provided an opportunity for Blacks to express their real and distinctive social experiences in the education system (Taylor, Gillborn, & Ladson-Billings, 2009). Deficit Thinking Theory was used in this study as a potential data analysis code to highlight real issues of structural and systematic inequalities (Trent, Artiles, & Englert, 1998). Focusing on the experiences of African American male educators may help with recruiting other African American male educators (Noguera, 2003) and add to the body of research.

This case study allowed the researcher to get background knowledge of the participants and tell the narrative about why these men chose to remain in the teaching profession. The

researcher used an adaptation of an interview style from the Dolbeare and Shuman (Shuman, 1982) three-interview series, which provided an understanding of the context of the participants' experience (Seidman, 2006). Semi-structured interviews with the African American educators focused on what they perceive as necessary systematic changes to improve support for African American males to enter and remain in the teaching profession. A case study with a cross case analysis of two separate cases from the administrator perspective and the teacher perspective was used. The use of an inductive approach allowed the researcher to start with interviews/ participants' views, finding patterns, themes and general concepts. The participants were engaged in a process of reviewing, clarifying results after follow up sessions. Responses from the participants' were coded for themes for a more comprehensive and holistic picture of their experiences, supports, and barriers in public schools.

Problem Statement

Teaching is a profession that is well sought after in the United States yet there is a shortage of African American male teachers in our educational system (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011). According to Delpit (2006) teaching can be a rewarding experience that can inspire students for the rest of their lives. How to increase the amount of African American male teachers needs exploring in the United States so Black boys can see positive male role models as their teachers (Delpit, 2006). This has become an important topic because of the widening achievement gap between Black students and their White counterparts, the school-to-prison pipeline system, increased disciplinary actions and the over placement of African American males in Special Education programs (Banks, 2011; Bickel, 1981).

During the 1940s, teaching was the number one profession for Black men in the United States with 36% of African American males working in the classroom. Currently the numbers

are drastically different, with only 9.6% Black teachers and, 2% of whom are Black males (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011).

African American educator male input is important to the conversation of ways to diversify the teaching force (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011). Using semi-structured interview questions to focus on male teachers and administrators' perceptions of teaching to gain perspectives about why they believe teachers remain or leave the teaching profession. Although this is a small population of participants in the New York City area, it can add to the conversation about the importance of implementing changes to successfully help African American male educators and students (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study was to present the journey of eight experienced past and present teachers and three past and present administrators of the NYC Department of Education to understand how their school experiences as African American males had positive and negative impacts on their lives. This study specifically focused on what led them to pursue and either remain or leave the New York City public K-12 school system. It also utilized interviews analyzed using cross case analysis techniques to compare themes generated from the teacher interviews and the principal interviews to see if the two perceptions coincide.

In order to institute effective change, understanding the current situation from the lens of these African American male teachers was important to this study. Conducting interviews with a few past and present teachers and administrators in the New York City Public School system shed light on their perspectives about the experiences of African American male educators (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011).

Role of Theory

Self-determination is a motivational variable focusing a unified sense of self (Deci & Ryan, 2004). Self-Determination Theory (SDT) deals with both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as factors for success. Societal factors, according to this perspective are responsible for facilitating or impeding growth. This theory understands that every human has three basic psychological needs, which are competence, autonomy and relatedness. Competence is a sense of confidence when people work effectively to enhance their skills and build capacity. Autonomy is the need to control the course our lives by being perceived as the origin of our behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2004). Relatedness gives a sense of connection to others and belonging to a community. Each component works together to develop growth and the well being of others.

In case studies, existing theories can be used to serve as a blueprint to guide the research (Yin, 2014). The use of theories in qualitative research provides a lens and shapes the types of questions the researcher asks (Creswell, 2009). Critical Race Theory (CRT) was also considered when examining the conditions in the schools that led to the successes or barriers of these Black men's experiences in their schools. Using the Critical Race Theory (CRT) stance allowed the researcher to look at ways to improve existing conditions of systematic racism and experiences linked to Black teachers and their experiences that led to their successes and failures in education. Deficit Thinking Theory posits that blaming the victim for deficiencies and lack of motivation can be attributed to inadequate socialization at home and poverty (Burciaga; 2015; Trent, Artiles & Englert, 1998). Cultural biases and stereotypes exist, leading to generalizations about specific cultures. Asians, for example are typically associated with excelling in school. Black students on the other hand are considered from low-income, exhibiting disruptive behavior and in need of remedial instruction (Noguera, 2003). The focus of this case study was to analyze

the participants' perceptions concerning the supports and barriers African American males face in education and why these teachers and administrators either remained or left education to pursue other career options.

Research Questions

This case study described the experiences of eight experienced past and present African American male teachers of the New York City Department of Education, three of which left teaching to start an education technology company and three past and present administrators of the New York City Department of Education, one of which left to start an educational consulting firm and discuss possible ways to increase the African American male presence in the New York City public school system. Specific interview questions were asked to allow the participants to reconstruct their experiences from childhood up until the time they become teachers, experiences with their families and their environment and the meaning of these experiences (Seidman, 2006). The overarching question for the study:

1) What are the perceptions of eight African American male New York City's K-12 public school teachers and three administrators about what constitutes educational supports and restrictions?

The sub-questions are:

2) What meaning do the teachers and administrators attach to education supports and barriers they faced growing up in the public school system?

3) What are potential changes that the participants suggest can be made to the teaching profession to support African American male students?

4) What were the commonalities and differences in the perceptions about supports and barriers for the teachers and administrators?

Significance of the Study

The findings from this study will be available to educators interested in this phenomenon and to K-12 teachers and administrators in the New York City Department of Education allowing them to take a deeper look at the experiences of African American male teachers, their successes, and challenges. Understanding their perceptions about successes and barriers of Black men working as educators provided valuable information about how they feel they are perceived as educators. Their responses convinced the researcher of the importance of this topic and how it should be addressed on a larger scale to change the narrative of these men in education.

In order to motivate Black men to become educators, there must be a change in their educational experiences as students and teachers. As students, there should be greater representation of them in the classrooms as teachers and when they are at the college age, there should be additional factors presented to motivate them to choose a career in education. Conducting this study is part of the conversation, which should be expanded to include many other African American male teachers and also getting the perspective from other groups of teachers that are non-African American males.

Definition of Terms

African American and Black: "The terms African American and Black are used interchangeably to refer to the same ethnic group of people, because older literature references Blacks or Black Americans and more recent studies reference African Americans" (Washington-White, 2011, p. 8).

College-educated: A person who has an education beyond a Bachelor's degree.

Educator: A person who works in an educational setting in the role of a teacher, principal, superintendent, or personnel conducting professional development for teachers.

Socioeconomic Status: A social position depending on occupation, education, and income (McTavous, 2007).

Theories

Self-determination theory (SDT): Deci and Ryan's (2004) theory assents that human beings have a tendency to develop a unified sense of self with both nature and nurture as integral parts of either enabling or impeding growth of character. This theory states that there are three basic universal, psychological needs of humans: competence, relatedness and autonomy. Competence is a need to be effective when dealing with the environment. Relatedness is the need to have connections to others through building meaningful relationships and autonomy is the need to control the course of our lives (Deci & Ryan, 2004).

Critical Race Theory (CRT): This theory addresses systemic racism from embedded structures and customs that continue to uphold oppressive group relationships on the basis of income, status, and educational attainment (Taylor et al., 2009). Within these structures are systems supporting the interests of powerful Whites who create opportunities for Blacks to suffer racial inequality (Taylor et al., 2009).

Deficit Thinking Theory: This theory deals with the idea of blaming the victim because deficiencies in the schools, including academic failure, are direct results of low-income, culturally and racially different groups, rather than blaming real issues such as structural and systematic inequalities that permeate these environments (Trent, Artiles, & Englert, 1998).

CHAPTER 11: LITERATURE REVIEW

African American male teachers in the United States

Traditionally, students were educated in separate facilities with White teachers teaching White students and Black teachers teaching Black students (McBride, 2006). The *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) Supreme Court case ruled it constitutional to maintain two separate school systems as long as the facilities were "separate but equal" (McBride, 2006). In 1950, teaching was one of the major occupations and more than half of the education professionals were Black (Cole, 1986). African American male teachers were seen as role models within the school system working specifically with Black children. The fight for integrating schools continued and ended up with a victorious ruling in 1954. This significant case, *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954), led to the overturning of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1986) ruling of having separate schools and for the first time permitted the integration of public schools in the United States (Howard & Milner, 2004). This victorious ruling was celebrated as a significant part of U.S. history, yet it left negative impacts on the Black community (Howard & Milner, 2004). African American students ended up in overcrowded, understaffed schools with limited materials to foster learning (Howard & Milner, 2004).

In 1954 there were over 82,000 African American educators. Between 1954 and 1965, approximately 38,000 African American educators lost their positions in schools (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011). Changes swept across the country as integration was embraced, yet cultural connections and common relationships were dismantled (Howard & Milner, 2004). Concerns over integration and academic achievement became critical. Sixty years after the *Brown v. Education* (1954) ruling, retention trends are showing a significant Black teacher shortage (Farinde et al., 2016).

While pubic concern over the widening gap in the education of African American students and their white counterparts continues to increase, it is not a new issue. Prior to the integration of schools, Black students performed well (Lewis & Sealey-Ruiz, 2011). Post-integration, large academic gaps became associated with a decline in the relationship between African American students and African American teachers (Lewis & Sealey-Ruiz, 2011). In fact, this has been a prevailing problem since the 1960s (Nelson, 1986). The issue of *de facto* segregation has drawn invisible lines of demarcation that limit the success of African American students on the basis of race and socioeconomic status (Nelson, 1986).

A Brief History of Education: A Statistical Analysis of the Teaching Profession

Teaching is the most sought-after profession in the United States (Bristol, 2015). Unfortunately, only 2% (60,000) of the 6 million entering the profession are Black men (Bristol, 2015; Hawkins, 2015; Kena, Hussar, McFarland, Brey, Musu-Gillette, Wang, Zang & Rathbun, 2016). This significant underrepresentation is very alarming, particularly in contrast to the percentage of White female teachers, 63% of the teaching force (Toldson, 2010). The variance of representation of teachers is significant because only 27% of White female students are currently attending school~~s~~ (Toldson, 2010).

Across the board, male teachers are in short supply. There are twice as many White male students as White male teachers, three times as many Black male students as Black teachers, and seven times as many Hispanic male students as Hispanic male teachers (Bristol, 2015; Toldson, 2010). According to Toldson (2010), these numbers suggest that the overrepresentation of White female teachers is prominent within U.S. schools, with an underrepresentation of both Black and Hispanic teachers (Delpit, 2006; Toldson, 2010). “Nationally, Black and Hispanic boys spend the majority of their school experiences under cross-gender and cross-cultural supervision” (p. 183).

Compared to student demographics, the lack of diversity in the teaching force is alarming. Changing the demographics of teaching will involve using preventative measures to ensure equity in training and hiring practices (Noguera, 2003). Beginning with early education, intentional diversity is necessary in all school districts (Noguera, 2003). Understanding the diversity of the United States is critical to the education system, in which students are the direct beneficiaries. A huge component of this includes having adequate representation of the various populations in the classroom. Necessary changes in hiring practices are crucial for the active recruitment and sustained representation of African American males in the classroom (Noguera, 2003).

The Plight of African American Male Students in Public School

Inaccurate stereotypes permeate the school system, leading cultures to be perceived as overvalued or undervalued, depending on their racial background and socioeconomic status (Noguera, 2003). Countless accounts of reinforced stereotypes invade perceptions of specific groups, leading to actions of inadequacy by today's educators. Placing the blame on cultural inadequacies shifts the failure of students in circumstances beyond the scope of the school building and absolves the schools' responsibility to create ways of reversing academic trends (Noguera, 2003).

Understanding the diversity of the United States is critical to the education system in which students are the direct beneficiaries. A huge component of this understanding includes having an adequate representation of the diverse population represented in the classroom. However, still today, the population of teachers who represent the classroom is greatly imbalanced, particularly within the African American community (Delpit, 2006; Noguera, 2003).

Since the desegregation of public schools in 1954, the percentage of African American teachers, particularly male public school teachers, has steadily decreased (Taylor et al., 2009). Bridging the lines of demarcation, maintaining separation that was seemingly beneficial to students only created opportunities for institutionalized segregation to become prevalent. Within institutions, glass ceilings remain invisible barriers that essentially prevent the growth and success of African Americans, particularly African American men (Taylor et al., 2009).

The underrepresentation of African American males in the teaching profession reduces the chances that African American students will encounter positive role models who resemble them in the classroom setting (Bristol, 2015; Delpit, 2006; Noguera, 2003). This can be problematic for both the students and their community. Moreover, in addition to cultural commonalities, the relatability level also increases significantly once students encounter teachers with similar experiences growing up. Thus, a paradigm shift in diversity of the teaching force is essential. By considering ways to provide incentives for African American males to enter the teaching profession, changes will become mandatory that will serve to alter the mindset of students who inadvertently feel disconnected from school because of the limited number of professional role models who represent them in this system.

As noted earlier, while *Brown vs. Board of Education* promoted integration and student equality in public schools, it also led to a significant loss of Black educators (Lewis & Sealey-Ruiz, 2011). As a result, large academic gaps have been unfairly associated with African American students, and change can only occur when the number of African American teachers increases (Lewis & Sealey-Ruiz, 2011). However, these teachers must first receive adequate training once they enter the profession to bridge the education gap between Black and White students. To achieve this level of training, teachers must be prepared to understand and deal with

the self-asserting and cultural needs of Black students, which vary from those of White students (Lewis & Sealey-Ruiz, 2011).

Educational reform calls for increasing faculty diversity (Vavrus, 1995). Typically, faculties who are comprised of an overwhelmingly White and female population are the dominant teaching force in the American public system. With little experience in diversity, less than 5% of faculty nationally experience teaching in inner-city classrooms with students who have different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and statuses (Noguera, 2003; Vavrus, 1995). This predicament leads to African American students experiencing minimum encounters with teachers who look like them and can identify with them (Wilder, 2000). African American teachers are significantly underrepresented in college, and specifically in teacher education programs (Wilder, 2000). Given this shortage of African American educators, African American students remain at a disadvantage; research has shown that African American students succeed more with African American teachers than with middle-class White teachers, given that the former has a deeper understand of their students' cultural lives (Wilder, 2000).

Since enlisting minority teachers is essential (Wilder, 2000), recruitment efforts must become more vigorous for schools of education. In reviewing U.S. statistical forecasts, it is projected that by the year 2020, 46% of the nation's entire school-age population will be comprised of minorities (Wilder, 2000). This implies that these children must start seeing educators who can serve as role models from their ethnic backgrounds and socioeconomic status and support the idea that they have overcome the odds to become successful, although they came from similar struggles as their students (Wilder, 2000).

Diversifying the teaching population is critical if students are to experience positive interactions from the adults who share the same cultural backgrounds. Opponents to this

argument believe cultural background and perspective have little to no impact on the success of African American students (Bristol, 2015; Toldson, 2011). They argue that an overall paradigm shift is necessary for all educators, administrators, and policymakers, regardless of race or cultural background (Toldson, 2011). Although this is an appropriate and necessary stance, statistics have suggested otherwise. As Noguera (2003) indicated, when students attend schools where they feel a sense of pride, where their identities are celebrated, their success rates increase.

Challenges Associated with African American Teachers and African American Male Students

As noted earlier, prior to the integration of public schools, inherently separate but equal educational facilities diminished the quality of education for African American students in the United States. Variations in academic achievement were largely attributed to the invisible glass ceiling placed on students prior to entering the classroom. Meeting promotional criteria for Blacks became less attainable once clear demarcations of systematic and institutional racism were established (Lipman, Burns, & McArthur, 1996; Spitzer & Aronson, 2015; Taylor et al., 2009).

According to Taylor, Gillborn & Ladson-Billings (2009), racial barriers and classism exist on multiple levels. As White supremacy continues to shape our modern world and seems to be viewed as the norm and an ingrained value in our society. Within this system, society accepts racism as ordinary and has not altered the political system and power structure favoring privileged, wealthy, White men who leave “non-Whites” in an ongoing system of political and power struggles (Alexander, 2010; Taylor et al., 2009). Structural systems are so imbedded within American culture that non-Whites realize social, historic, and political disadvantages

based on their non-Whiteness (Lipman et al., 1996; Spitzer & Aronson, 2015; Taylor et al., 2009).

Also critical is the shortage of African American male representation in the teaching force. Many factors contribute to this reality, including the declining percentage of African American males graduating from college. Since 2004, the Schott Foundation for public school has documented that of all gender, racial, and ethnic groups, Black males are the least likely to secure regular diplomas. The percentage of African American males graduating from high school with their cohorts is less than half (Holzman, 2012). When looking at the most recent state-reported graduation data from 2009-2010, Black males in 38 of the 50 states and the District of Columbia had the lowest graduation rates compared to their counterparts (Holzman, 2012). "In 2009, 7,603 black males and 25,725 Black females graduated from college with a degree in education" (Toldson, 2010, p. 183). With a current graduation rate of 16%, most Black males are not graduating from college and those who do are less likely to choose majors in education; ironically, those who choose education are not becoming teachers (Toldson, 2010). The percentage of Black men with education degrees who pursue teaching is only 23%, compared to 27% for White men, 41% for Black women, and 42% for White women (Toldson, 2010).

Throughout the United States, Black males are also more likely to experience challenges in schools because of punishment, expulsion, and special education labels—all of which ultimately lead to academic failure (Holzman, 2012). Despite the significant rise in the number of Black students in the school system, there are few role models of African American descent to teach them. As a result, a disproportionate number of African American students, particularly males, struggle in the school system, face frequent disciplinary actions, are highly represented in special education programs, and have difficulty graduating from college with their peers (Taylor

et al., 2009; Toldson, 2010). As well, underlying issues of classroom and behavior management persist, which may decrease by maintaining the number of African American female teachers and simultaneously increasing the number of Black male teachers to represent the sizable group of Black students in the school system (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011; Toldson, 2010). Addressing these concerns are crucial not only to helping young Black males but also for building equality in a failing educational system.

A Quantitative Lens on Recruitment and Retention

Recruiting educators of color is a high priority, especially in urban areas. Currently, White teachers comprise of 73% of the workforce in the inner city (Brown &Butty, 1999). High teacher attrition rates and the gender-imbalanced population of teachers contribute to a need for hiring new teachers, especially ethnically diverse ones. New methods to recruit minority teachers must be developed to change the face of teaching, particularly for African American male students who may need role models that resemble them in school, especially those who may lack father figures at home (Brown &Butty, 1999).

A study conducted by (Brown & Butty, 1999) looked at 140 African American male teachers, teaching in PGCPS (Prince George's County (Maryland) Public Schools, outside of Washington, DC between 1993 and 1998. During this time approximately 717 African American male teachers were hired. Based on this roster, teachers received surveys that were mailed to their jobs. This study examined background, undergraduate experience in college, their qualification and motivation. The researcher used three different logistical analyses however only 67 of the 140 teachers sampled were part of the statistical model. The first finding cited that males who aspired to teach wanted impart knowledge on students. The second analysis did not reveal significant predictors with regards to the motivation of these African American

males remaining as educators after 10 years. The third analysis looked at their undergraduate major an indicator as to whether Black men would be working as principals and teachers in public schools in 10 years. Although they faced challenges, there was literature to support the need for minority teachers due to the changing demographics of the student population, and projected teaching population, especially in urban settings. They reached this conclusion by stating, "as the demand for quality teachers increases and the pool of minority teacher candidates decreases, school districts have to undertake initiatives to recruit and retain minority teachers" (Brown & Butty, 1999).

Reforming Recruiting and Retention Strategies

Sustaining the African American community depends largely on the current educational system (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011). Recent endeavors by former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan have attempted to diversify the teaching force to represent the student population appropriately (Toldson, 2010). Deliberate, systematic shifts are necessary for creating opportunities for change, adaptation, and growth. When considering the current situation, it is clear that academic failures are prevalent among people from specific cultures and socioeconomic statuses. African American males especially face myriad issues in society that prevent their successes (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011). As the Black student population rises, one dire need is to increase the presence of experienced Black educators (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011), from similar cultural backgrounds in order to improve their educational experience and, consequently, their school performance (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011).

In short, educational reform calls for increasing faculty diversity (Lanier et al., 1995). As noted earlier, White females dominate the faculty of American public schools. As a result, less than 5% of the faculty have worked and interacted with inner-city students from a variety of

backgrounds (Lanier et al., 1995). This is a clear underrepresentation of African American teachers available to lead African American students and identify with their personal and social struggles (Wilder, 2000). Moreover, there is a clear underrepresentation of African American teachers in college and teacher education programs (Brown & Butty, 1999). The reality of this shortage of African American educators places African American students are at a severe disadvantage (Brown & Butty, 1999).

Therefore, recruiting and retaining African American male teachers are necessary for underperforming schools (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011) in order to meet the significant rise in the number Black students in public schools and offer them role models of African American males to teach them. Thus far, this disproportionate number of African American students, especially males, have encountered academic struggles, disciplinary actions for their behaviors, high enrollment in special education, and risks of not graduating with their peers from college (Toldson, 2010). Addressing these concerns are not only crucial for African American students but also for building equality in a failing educational system. The former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has addressed the issue of diversifying the teaching force to more appropriately represent an equally diverse student population (Brown & Butty, 1999; Toldson, 2010). Underlying the call for diverse educators is the need to recognize that these teachers must be trained adequately when they enter the profession in order to close the achievement gap between Black and White students. Thus, teachers must themselves learn to understand and interact with the unique needs of Black students (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011).

Historically Black College Universities (HBCUs) are combatting these issues by establishing and developing teacher training programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education that prepare and place African American male teachers in high-need schools (Irvine &

Fenwick, 2011). This initiative is a starting part to improving Black male teacher representatives in schools (Irvine & Fenwick, 2011). Other programs also exist that support male teachers of color in making a smoother transition into teaching. An example of such a program is The Boston Teacher Residency Male Educators of Color Network, affiliated with the Boston Teacher Residency (BTR) program. This program trains preservice teachers once they make a 3-year commitment to Boston Public Schools (Bristol, 2015).

The initiation of the Boston Teacher Residency (BTR) program was the result of the high teacher turnover rate, particularly of Black male teachers. Consequently, professional development opportunities were implemented for male teachers of color to help them navigate their school environments (Bristol, 2015). Since part of the professional development included reflecting on practice and receiving socio-emotional support from similarly situated individuals, this program provided an outlet for the African American men to discuss specific challenges they faced, including stereotypical positions that their colleagues expected them to play (Bristol, 2015). By creating a safety network for the participants, they were able to learn classroom strategies and support male teachers and district leaders of color. Creating this program was effective and can serve as models for other school districts trying to facilitate and improve learning outcomes for students of color (Bristol, 2015).

Encouraging teachers to enroll in preservice teacher programs is crucial, but it is also important to improve the statistics of Black boys graduating from high school and college. Given the drastic situation that numerous Black males not obtaining their Bachelor's degrees by the age of 25, it becomes essential to create positive opportunities for successful school experiences from elementary all the way to high school. One particular program in Englewood, New Jersey, specifically targets Black men. The Urban Prep Charter Academy opened as the first all-male

public charter school (King, 2011). The vision behind this school was to implement radical change to reverse the statistics of African American males dropping out of high school. To accomplish this vision, the leaders carefully hired faculty whose background resembled that of the students, and as a result, the majority of the faculty, administrators, leaders, and teachers were African American men. As this review of the literature concludes, diversifying the teaching population is critical if African American male students are to experience positive interactions with adults in schools because they share the same cultural background.

Counter-arguments

Despite the arguments that cultural awareness is necessary for bridging the achievement gaps between Black males and their White counterparts, opponents believe cultural background and perspective have little to no impact on the success of African American students (Toldson, 2011). Conventional wisdom states that African American students will excel with teachers who share their racial background, yet few studies have identified the positive correlations between student achievement and their teachers who share this background (Dee, 2004). Although students may feel more comfortable around teachers with whom they can identify, there is not enough evidence to suggest a direct correlation between racial background alone and student achievement (Dee, 2004).

Another argument states that students need additional male role models because White females constitute 70% of the teaching population (Shreffler, 1998). While White males do not share the same culture as these students, they are relevant and enough of them are in the school to fill critical mentor roles needed for at-risk Black male students (Shreffler, 1998). Opponents argue that an overall paradigm shift is necessary for all educators, administrators, and policymakers regardless of race or cultural background (Toldson, 2011).

Another counter-argument is that academic performance is linked to a lack of educational values from working parents (Noguera, 2003). In Marvin County, California, teachers once working in an affluent neighborhood with predominantly white students saw demographic changes when a huge influx of poor Mexican immigrants surfaced. As a result, the district suffered from lower standardized test scores and increased dropout rates. When surveyed, the teachers argued that the poor academic performance of the students stemmed from families who did not value education due to their socioeconomic status (Noguera, 2003).

Success of Black Male Graduates

Even with the significant number of Black male dropouts in school (Holzman, 2012), there are those that persist and have successful futures. Despite the statistics, they have college aspirations and have positive experiences in school (Brooms & Davis, 2017). Understanding ways to increase the success of Black students includes having cultural, social and human capital resources to enhance and support their educational expectations (Brooms & Davis, 2017). Early support is crucial increase Black males' preparation for college. School environments (K-12) must reinforce and reaffirm their identities through school, family and community support to improve academic performance and outcomes (Brooms & Davis, 2017). Looking at successes of Black men and the support systems that create positive paths for academic achievement is essential for examining ways to change the narrative of Black men.

Theoretical Framework

Theory:

In case study research, existing theories often function as a framework to guide the development of the research (Yin, 2014). Theories also serve as a lens to interpret and determine different constructs, to guide research questions and to analyze data collected (Creswell, 2009;

Yin, 2014). Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Deficit Thinking Theory (DTT) served as the framework or blueprint for this study.

Understanding theories that support and inhibit the growth of African American males was crucial in this study. Many theories include several factors, which are interwoven to form a complete picture. Understanding them and how they developed can help contribute to recognizing ways to improve the African American male experience as teachers and administrators in the public school K-12 education system.

Most motivation theories view motivation as a unitary phenomenon yet it varies based on the person and the level of motivation. Motivation means being moved to do something (Ryan & Deci, 2000). If someone does not have a desire or impetus to act, they are characterized as being unmotivated whereas motivation requires energy and actions (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Quality of your experience varies depending on intrinsic of extrinsic reasons for motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it is enjoyable while extrinsic motivation refers to doing something because of the outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Although intrinsic motivation is important, it is not the only factor affecting outcomes. Extrinsic motivation deals with completing a task because of its end result. When looking at external factors in this study, additional theories, Critical Race and Deficit Thinking were examined and noted.

Importance of Self Determination

In order to achieve success, self-determination is necessary. Self-determination begins with the tenet that everyone has the ability to develop a unified sense of self (Deci & Ryan, 2004). Some social factors play integral roles in supporting the innate tendencies while others impede their progress (Deci & Ryan, 2004). Environments, according to this perspective are either facilitators or inhibitors of these processes resulting in negative outcomes. Self-

determination theory (SDT) is based on the idea that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are compelling factors for action.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT). All human beings have a tendency to develop a unified sense of self (Deci & Ryan, 2004). Interactions of both nature and nurture are integral parts of either enabling or impeding growth of character. This theory posits that there are clear environmental factors either support or thwart effective development. As such, social needs include the need for competence, autonomy and relatedness. Human beings interact with their environment and draw from experiences that allow them to maintain and enhance their functioning (Deci & Ryan, 2004).

According to self-determination theory, there are three basic universal, psychological needs of humans: competence, relatedness and autonomy. Competence is a need to be effective when dealing with the environment. Relatedness is the need to have connections to others through building meaningful relationships and autonomy is the need to control the course of our lives (Deci & Ryan, 2004).

Gravitating towards healthy environments that support growth is part of the healthy human psyche (Deci & Ryan, 2004). Although these needs may vary within cultures they are necessary through all periods of human development. One of the needs human develop is competence, which refers to having effective interactions with one's social environment showing capacity to thrive. This leads to enhancing one's skills by seeking challenges to optimize one's ability for success. Relatedness, a second component refers to making connections with others, which fosters a sense of belonging and integration into the community. Finally, autonomy refers to expressing oneself through behavior without causing external forces to alter those expressions.

This motivation is intrinsic and relies on a person's own interest and values to influence their behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2004).

Critical Race Theory. The second theory, Critical Race Theory was also used to form questions about how participants' experiences with teachers and educational structures impacted their lives either positively or negatively (Taylor et al., 2009). Critical Race Theory addresses systemic racism stemming from embedded structures and customs that continue to sustain and uphold oppressive group relationships on the basis of income, status, and educational attainment (Taylor et al., 2009). Within these structures are systems supporting the interests of powerful Whites who create opportunities for Blacks to suffer racial inequality (Taylor et al., 2009).

Critical Race Theory creates opportunities for people of color to express their real and distinctive social experiences (Taylor et al., 2009). This theory challenges the status quo and the Black experience with the understanding that treatment varies for individuals solely based on skin color. It acknowledges that perceptions of fairness, justice, and truth are reflections of the knower, while it also refutes the idea of colorblindness—another method of treating White privilege as invisible (Sleeter, 2016; Taylor et al., 2009).

Since this theory addresses systematic racism in imbedded structure, the researcher used it to create questions about socio-economic status and how structures of financial systems affected them as Black males growing up and whether or not their experiences were different based on their skin color. Critical Race Theory was also used to form questions about participants' views and experiences with teaching, the structure of education, the disproportionately low enrollment of people of color and lack of diversity in teaching (Taylor et al., 2009). Looking at structures including financial systems, growing up in low-income families, the participants' perceptions of the school system, and how many Black teachers they

encountered when they attended public schools was examined. Participants were also asked about suspension rates were as part of the interview process.

According to Sleeter (2016), in 2012 about 82% of the U.S. teaching force was White. Approximately 80% of graduates from teacher education programs for K-12 education are White even though White students are less than half the K-12 population (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Furthermore, White students are completing the university programs are much higher rates than students of color (Sleeter, 2016). Generally speaking, the teacher education programs are teaching cohorts of White teachers to teach ethnically and racially diverse students by simply offering a course or two on multicultural education (Sleeter, 2016). The continued production of teachers, inadequately prepared to teach racially diverse students is a product a racial system that is designed to meet White needs (Sleeter, 2016). When teacher education programs are mostly White, there are huge ramifications for what happens in the program. In 2007, approximately 78% of these programs were White. This means Whites are responsible for curriculum design, recruitment, the selection process, support of faculty members and create what constitutes racially diverse instruction (Sleeter, 2016).

Critical Race Theory challenges claims of neutrality and color blindness as a way to mask White privilege (Sleeter, 2016). When looking at conceptions of effective teaching, certification requirements and the structure of teacher education, ambiguous requirements prevent teachers of color from enrolling at the same rates as their White counterparts. Many factors contribute to this including cost of testing and limited references of racial and ethnic minorities on teacher certification exams (Petchauer, 2012; Sleeter, 2016). According to Milner and Howard (2013), programs such as Teach for America (TFA) have disproportionately low enrollment of people of color. Shifting the center of gravity of any program requires diversity of faculty and students.

With the center being defined by Whites, based on white interest any changes that occur are aligned with White interest. According to CRT, this neutrality, color blindness and having a dominant ideology are systems in place to mask White privilege and power (Sleeter, 2016).

Deficit Thinking Theory (DTT). The third and final theory for this study, Deficit Thinking Theory was used to formulate questions about participants' perceptions of growing up as students in the public school system. Deficit thinking theory deals with the idea of blaming the victim and attributing inadequacies to poverty, low-income, and lack of socialization at home rather than blaming real issues such as structural and systematic inequalities that permeate these environments (Burciaga, 2015; Trent, Artiles, & Englert, 1998). Since this theory posits that blaming the victim for deficiencies and lack of motivation are connected to poverty (Burciaga, 2015), the researcher used this to ask and questions about types of discrimination, if any, they believe Black men face in the education system. From the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* ruling that deemed schools separate but equal, to the introduction of IQ tests to further separate students based on specific numbers of intelligence, these systematic inequalities continue to draw lines of demarcation that maintain social norms to benefit those on the upper echelon of the pay scale and from White suburban communities (Trent et al., 1998).

Within this theory are varying degrees of behaviors including antilocution, avoidance, and discrimination (Allport, 1954). Antilocution refers to verbal comments against people, groups, or communities that are not directly addressed to the target. Additionally, avoidance, such as movement to other communities to avoid African Americans, occurs as a form of prejudice. Finally, discrimination targets individuals or groups by preventing them from achieving their goals (Allport, 1954).

Understanding African American males, their experiences in school, their graduation rates and the school-to-prison pipeline system is one of the first steps in formulating a plan to change the narrative of African American male success rates in school and retaining them as educators. Even though this is not a blueprint to increasing amount of educators in the public school system, understanding their feelings towards public school education is a precursor to a continuous conversation about necessary changes to increase African American educators in the public school system.

This study examined the journey of eight experienced past and present teachers of the NYC Department of Education, three of which left teaching to start an education technology company, three past and present administrators of the NYC Department of Education, one of which left to start an educational consulting firm and two others who are currently practicing administrators on different levels, one works directly in the Central Office within the Department of Education while the other works as a full time principal for High School in Brooklyn, NY. It looked at the successes and barriers that led them to the education profession and the reasons they either chose to stay in education or leave to pursue other careers. Understanding the perspectives of African American male educators and the importance they place on their experiences in education is relevant. Therefore, gaining rich insights into the challenges facing these African American educators provided the researcher with these important perspectives. Since people interpret events differently according to their experiences and viewpoints, it was critical to obtain their interpretation of their particular situations from the first-person position.

Looking at both positive and negative experiences of these African American male educators was important for this study. As an educator, the researcher feels it is important to be aware of these issues and consider possible ways to address the challenge. Opening this dialogue

is relevant to the fields of education, psychology, and counseling because exploring trends cause awareness of specific situations and could launch discussions on dealing with problems and successes in the school setting. Developing preventative measures and continuing the positive trends by dialoguing with educators could have far-reaching impact to increase the representation of African American male educators in the school system.

Summary

How to increase the retention rate of African American male educators is a problem that requires further investigation into positive supports and barriers African American male teachers and administrators face. The theories of Self-Determination, Critical Race and Deficit Thinking were used to understand factors that motivate these African American males to remain in education and the obstacles they faced growing up, and when working in public school (K-12) education today. In addition, identifying effective strategies that propel these men to become educators and encourages them to remain as teachers could also help to increase the number of African American males entering and remaining in the teaching profession.

The problem of African American males not entering the teaching profession has been an issue since the *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) case. The researcher addressed this concern by asking the African American male participants about their experiences growing up in school, reasons for choosing and staying in the teaching profession, and whether or not they plan on continuing in their career as educators until retirement.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this case study was to present the journey of eight experienced past and present teachers of the New York City Department of Education, three of which left teaching to start an education technology company. Three administrators of were also included, one of which left to start an educational consulting firm and two others who are currently practicing administrators on different levels, one working for the Central Office of the New York City Department of Education while the other works as a principal at a High School in Brooklyn, NY. This study was designed to understand how their school experiences added to the successes and created barriers in their lives. This study specifically focused on what led them to pursue and remain in the New York City public K-12 school system. The study also explored African American male teachers' and administrators' perceptions of teaching to gain perspectives about why they chose to either remain or leave the public education system. This study utilized interviews thematically coded to create the eleven cases, which were cross case analyzed to compare the teacher and the administrator cases interviews to see how their perceptions coincide.

Research Questions

The present study embodies exploratory aspects, thus the corresponding research questions were constructed to investigate aspects of the participants perspectives about contributions to their educational experience in K-12 public school education.

The formulation of the study's interview questions began by identifying the possible contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education. Since the researcher wanted to understand the school experiences of African American males as a way to determine the positive and negative impacts their education has on their lives, the next step was to identify a particular style of questioning used to gain a deeper

understanding of the participant and their background information. Semi-structured interview questions were conducted to gain an understanding of the experiences the participants lived through and how the experiences shape their lives and views of education (Seidman, 2006). To gain this knowledge, the researcher used a version of the Dolbeare and Shuman (Shuman, 1982) three-interview series to understand the context of the participants' experience (Seidman, 2006).

Prior to conducting interviews with participants, the researcher looked at a quantitative study conducted by Brown and Butty (1999). This study surveyed 140 African American male teachers working in the Prince George's County (Maryland) Public Schools between the years of 1993 and 1998. The researcher reviewed the findings of this study and used the findings at the end of her research to cross-reference the findings of the quantitative data with the thematically coded results from the interviews.

This research focused on the perspective of insiders and tried to construct meaning from their experiences. Purposeful selection allowed the researcher to gather information about participants' experiences while determining the connection between their experiences and their views about the research topic (Lapan et al., 2012). To obtain information, the qualitative researcher relied on face-to-face data collection. This allowed the researcher to ask questions while gaining insight through reflections of the participants' experiences (Lapan et al., 2012).

Qualitative methods were used to ask about their past experiences in school. Interviews allowed the participants to share as much as possible about their lives growing up until the time they became teachers (Seidman, 2006). The particular set of questions were geared to helping them reconstruct the events of their past and allow them to discuss stages to leading up to their career choice.

The four research questions that guided this study were:

1) What are the perceptions of eight African American male New York City's K-12 public teachers and three administrators about what constitutes educational supports and restrictions? The sub-questions are:

2) What meaning do the teachers and administrators attach to education supports and barriers they faced growing up in the public school system?

3) What are potential changes that the participants suggest can be made to the teaching profession to support African American male students?

4) What were the commonalities and differences in the perceptions about supports and barriers for the teachers and administrators?

Role of the researcher. One's worldview determines their philosophical orientation of the world and the nature of research (Creswell, 2014). Guba and Lincoln (1994) describes it paradigms, which are used as a framework to shed light on the researcher's views and beliefs about a particular phenomenon. "It represents a *worldview* that defines, for its holder, the nature of the "world," the individual's place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts" (p. 107). Guba and Lincoln (2005) discuss four basic beliefs, which converge to form one's own worldview: epistemology, axiology and ontology, leading to the choice of methodology. These perspectives about knowledge and values constitute the paradigm or worldview of the researcher as a basis for framing the research study (Patton, 1999). Epistemology is the nature of knowledge and how it is embedded in the theoretical perspective and methodology (Crotty, 1998). It helps us to understand and explain what we already know. Axiology represents the role of the researcher's values. Epistemology focuses on the knowledge, how it is created, valued and the reality between the researcher and the participants (Guba &

Lincoln, 1994). Axiology is related to values inherent in research and the role they play for both participants and the researcher (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Pragmatism, an alternative worldview that exists emerged as a philosophical tradition in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. It rejects the idea that the purpose of thought is to mirror, represent and describe reality. Despite its popularity there are various interpretations of what this paradigm means (Biesta, 2010). From a pragmatist perspective, researchers ask more precise questions about the implications and justifications of their research designs and focus on hands-on, real life experiences (Biesta, 2010). They believe thought is used for problem solving, prediction and action (Creswell, 2015). "Pragmatism offers a very specific way of knowledge, one claiming that the only way we can acquire knowledge is through a combination of action and reflection" (Biesta, 2010, p.112). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) state that pragmatists make decisions about using qualitative or quantitative methods based on the research questions. Christ (2013) agrees with this by stating that multiple forms of data should be collected to understand problems from various perspectives.

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews from a constructivist ontological stance. One major standing of constructivism is that "knowledge accumulates only in a relative sense through the formation of ever more informed and sophisticated constructions via the hermeneutical/dialectical process, as varying constructions are brought into juxtaposition" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, pg. 114). The relative view of reality is constructed as a result of one's social experience therefore denying the existence of absolute truths (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). An inductive approach was used where participants were engaged in a process of reviewing, clarifying results, codes and themes from the interview data.

Researching from an emic perspective allowed the researcher to co construct meanings with the participants, which included two colleagues. Relationships with the interviewees had the potential to create ethical issues, which were acknowledged in the description of the role of the researcher and addressed in the approved IRB application (Creswell, 2009). Since this was a qualitative study, the researcher played the role of the instrument and having these prior relationships afforded a unique and deeper understanding of the conditions of the participants (Maxwell, 2012).

The researcher understood the importance of capturing the perceptions and experiences about education from the black male teachers. Since the researcher was interested in the experiences of these men, exploring their perceptions through interactions was paramount (McTavous, 2007). Qualitative research focuses on understanding the perception of the participants (Lapan et al., 2012). This perspective is based on the belief that the viewpoints of the participants are understandable within the context of their lives.

Table 1
Researcher's Worldview Matrix

Worldview Matrix	**Constructivism**	**Critical**	**Pragmatism**
Epistemology: (knowledge, how it is created and disseminated)	Closeness: Researcher conducted interviews with past and present teachers and administrators to co construct the meaning of their perspective about their educational experiences as students and teachers or administrators. Gaining this knowledge through the interview process fostered a greater understanding of the African American male perception of working in the New York City Department of Education and successes and barriers contributing to them either remaining or leaving the teaching profession.		Multiple data strands included interviews from two different case studies (teachers and administrators) prior to the interviews the researcher reviewed the findings of this study and used this at the end of her research to cross-reference the findings of the quantitative data with the results of her qualitative study. The results of the qualitative data collection from teachers and administrators were then merged using cross case analysis.
Axiology: (Values) What is the role of their perspective of African American male teachers and the relationship between African American male students?	Researcher and participants recognized any biases they had prior to the interview process. The researcher did not introduce her own values when conducting the interviews and learning about the experiences of participants. She was careful when analyzing the data and checked for accuracy of the data to increase validity of the research. Her views and interpretations were readily discussed and shared with participants.	Researcher and participants shared their perspectives about making the teaching profession more marketable to African American males in order to improve the amount of Black male teachers in schools so Black students can see positive role models resembling them in the classroom setting.	Researcher was both emic and etic and collected data specific to local conditions. Etic: outsider interviewing Emic: Co-constructed meanings with participants and focused on understanding their perceptions.
Methodology: What process is used gain information?	Case study with a cross case analysis of two separate cases from the administrators and teacher perspectives. Inductive Approach: Researcher started with interviews/ participants' views, found patterns, themes and general concepts. Participants engaged in process of reviewing, clarifying results after follow up sessions.	Participants engaged in the process of member checking by clarifying responses, emerging themes/results and conclusions.	Qualitative: Researcher collected qualitative data then coded for themes.

Procedures

Bounding the Case. The data collection in this study took place over the course of four months. This allowed enough time for the researcher to meet with each participant, the results to be analyzed. Specifically, semi structured interview questions were used in face-to-face interviews with conveniently selected participants from the New York City Department of Education. Overall, teachers and administrators from ten different school districts in the New York City area comprised of the target population for this study. The researchers position as a teacher provided her with access to African American male participants working in public schools. The participants in this study were 8 teachers and 3 administrators from ten different schools. These teachers and administrators all have experience in the public school educational system in the New York City area.

Sample

Collins (2010) explicates that the process of a sampling design requires two distinct decisions. First, the researcher must decide on a strategy, which is known as the sample scheme. Second, the researcher must choose the number of participants, which is the sample size. Thus, the sampling design consists of both the sample scheme and the sample size (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007).

Purposive sampling schemes are associated with qualitative research designs and are employed by the researcher to choose specific participants to provide insight into a phenomenon (Collins, 2010). The goal of this sampling scheme is to add or generate new theories by obtaining fresh perspectives or new insights about the phenomena being studied (Collns, 2010). The sampling criteria were convenience and purposive based on the following criteria: (a)

Participants expressing interest in participating (b) African American male teachers; (c) African American male administrators; and (d) Past and current employees of NYCDOE education.

Of the eleven participants in the interview process, there were eight teachers and three administrators. Five teachers were in their current role for at least seven years. The remaining teachers were no longer working as teachers. Of the three administrators, two have been working in their current roles for at least ten years. One is currently working as a consultant for principals needing additional support in their roles.

Data collection.

Using suitable methods for data collection is critical when conducting research. The researcher chose to use collect qualitative data through semi-structured interviews. To accomplish this, the researcher started by developing a framework, which included using specific theories to drive the research questions. Since the researcher wanted to understand the school experiences of African American males as a way to determine the positive and negative impacts their education had on their lives, listening to their perspectives through face-to-face interviews allowed the researcher to gain insight about their experiences (Lapan et al., 2012).

Qualitative data collection. Qualitative data was collected in the form of semi-structured interviews. Interviews were conducted with select teachers and administrators whose experiences helped to shed light on the questions under study. Selection criteria included being an African American male past or present teacher or administrator of the New York City Department of Education. Cases fitting the criteria were selected for inclusion in the study. The interview protocol was designed using the constructs of the theoretical framework. The researcher used an adaptation of an interview style from the Dolbeare and Shuman (Shuman, 1982) three-interview series, which provided an understanding of the context of the participants'

experience (Seidman, 2006). The researcher authored the remainder of the questions, which allowed for the reconstruction of the participants' experiences with family, in their neighborhood growing up, their schools, with friends and at work. Questions focused on present day experiences regarding the topic African American educators in education. The researcher asked participants to reconstruct their experiences in teaching to elicit details about their experiences. Questions were also designed to allow participants to reflect of the meaning of their experiences (Seidman, 2006). They addressed how both how past experiences led them to their present situation and details of their present experiences. This combination lead to an understanding of how the past and present merged to explain reasons for their current career path in life (Seidman, 2006). (see Appendix A and B for interview protocol).

All interviews occurred face-to-face. A high quality recorder was used to record all interviews. Participants were not directly identified during the tapings. Each participant chose a pseudonym prior to any interviews to protect their anonymity. Each interview was transcribed into Microsoft Word for subsequent analysis. All transcriptions used the chosen pseudonym when referencing each participant. All transcripts were stored with a password-protected folder, which only the researcher had access.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained from both the University of Bridgeport and the New York City IRB board prior to the collection of any data. Participants signed a consent form acknowledging that participation was voluntary and they had the option to withdraw from the process at any time (Williamson & Prosser, 2003). Additionally, the participants received details of the face-to-face, audio-recorded interview with a digital recorder prior to signing. Once permission was granted and the participants consent to partaking in the study, the researcher reiterated that participation is confidential, voluntary and they had the right

withdraw without consequences. Additionally, participants also knew that they had the right to disregard any questions they did not feel comfortable answering. If there were sections they preferred to not record, the researcher did not record those sections. Furthermore, the researcher took all precautions to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of all participants. All recordings were stored in a password-protected file. The researcher was the only person who had access to any data that could identify participants. After completing the process, participants had the right to review the transcription and make any changes if they were not satisfied with the outcome. Transcripts were stored for the duration of the study. Finally, any publications of this document do not include any identifiable information of participants.

Individual Interviews. This study used interviews, which are one of the most important sources of case study research. Semi-structured questions (see Appendices A and B) were used to guide conversations with the researcher following the line of inquiry based on the study protocol and asking questions in an unbiased manner (Yin, 2014). Specific types of interviews were used when conducting these case studies. This case study used semi-structured interviews designed for the teachers and administrators. The researcher scheduled interviews with participants to collect information about their perspectives as African American male educators including any successes and barriers that led them to enter the teaching profession. Overall, this source is essential when collecting evidence about human affairs because the affairs should be interpreted and reported by those experiencing them (Yin, 2014). This format allowed her to stay within the framework of the questions while giving participants an opportunity to discuss any other relevant details about the topic. Each interview was approximately an hour and a half long. The participant consent form is in Appendix C and the interview questions can be found in

Appendix A or B. The questions were framed as open-ended providing the participant elaborate using examples if necessary.

Collecting data using face-to-face interactions allowed the researcher to ask questions while gaining insights through reflections of the participants' experiences (Lapan et al., 2012). Using a case study approach and analyzing the qualitative data from a phenomenological stance allowed the researcher to study a small sample of participants, using several interviews to gain perspectives of their experience growing up and the reasons for them becoming educators (Moustakas, 1994).

Focus group interview. One focus group interview was also conducted with two former educators and one current educator of the New York City Department of Education. This group met at a common location. The interview questions focused on a discussion of the participants' experiences as teachers or administrators and addressed their perceptions about supports and restrictions of African American male public school teachers and administrators in New York City K-12 public schools, educational supports and barriers participants faced growing up in the public school system and potential changes that can be made to the teaching profession to support African American male teachers and administrators. The interview questions can be found in Appendix D.

Data Analysis

Codes are used during qualitative inquiry to assign a summative attribute for portions of language-based data. To find a common language or theme throughout interview transcripts, cycles of coding are typically used (Saldana, 2015). Coding requires the constant comparison of data at every stage of analysis (Charmaz, 2006). For this study, qualitative interview data was analyzed using initial, focused and axial coding for predominant themes and categories to

emerge. Initial coding included naming each word, line or segment (Charmaz, 2006) and captured the meanings of the participants' responses (Maxwell, 2012; Saldana, 2015). All interviews were analyzed simultaneously. While initially coding the data, the researcher closely read and reviewed the data (Charmaz, 2006) for threats to confirmability, authenticity, dependability and credibility, which were addressed with analysis and coding (Mertens, 2012). The initial codes were reviewed and listed using the Atlas ti software. The researcher used the software to organize the interviews then to locate recurring words that were used as codes (Saldana, 2015). Additionally, the Atlas ti software, enabled the researcher to focus code, which involved finding the most frequent initial codes from the data to sort, synthesize then integrate the data based on the similarities of ideas in each sentence (Charmaz, 2006). After this, axial coding was used to connect the focused codes based on specific properties, which allowed the building of theory from the data (Charmaz, 2009).

Using initial coding techniques allowed the researcher to interact with the data very closely then indicated a progression of events (Charmaz, 2006). This allowed the researcher to begin to understand teacher and administrator perceptions of their experiences, what actions influenced their decision to either remain or leave the teaching profession and their current beliefs about their preparation and career experiences as African American males in education. After the first cycle coding the researcher used second cycle coding methods to reorganize and reanalyze the data coded through the first cycle (Saldana, 2015). Focused coding was used to create categories and find common themes, which was used to sort the data that emerged from the initial set of codes. This allowed the development of broader categories, theories, themes and/ or concepts and organization from the first cycle codes (Saldana, 2015). These procedures ensured that the researcher was with provided a clear picture of emergent themes on any

contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education.

The final step included a cross analysis of the data. Merriam (1998) states that multiple case studies should be performed in two steps; first using a within-case analysis then a cross-case analysis. Since there are two different cases being studied here the researcher compared the data for the teachers and then compared and analyzed the data for the administrators to find similarities and differences across the cases. Data was gathered, analyzed independently then after this there was a cross-case analysis. Using this comparison with In Vivo codes, (initial themes and refined themes) showed any similarities and discrepancies in the data.

After the interview protocol was developed the following procedures occurred: 1) Interview purposefully selected individuals using a recording device; 2) Listen to each interview immediately after the interview process; 3) Transcribe interviews; 4) Add each interview transcript into the software Atlas ti; 5) Search for common key words and phrases; 6) Create codes using common key words; 7) Create a code report (cut and paste coded data into a Microsoft word document; 8) Examine the code reports. Consider combining or eliminating based on the data present 9) Read through the code reports, interpret the data closely 10) Recode transcripts using the Atlas ti software to capture secondary coded material 11) Consider connections of secondary codes (axial coding); 12) Begin creating theory from axial codes; 13) Review literature to check for similar findings about the topic to increase the credibility (Mertens, 2012).

Focus group interview: The focus group interview was recorded and transcribed in the same way as the individual interviews and was analyzed using initial, focused and axial coding (Charmaz, 2006). The initial codes were reviewed and listed using the Atlas ti software, then

focused coding created categories, categorized data into common themes, which were refined to generate broad themes.

Validity and Credibility

Case study research is an approach used when the researcher wants to uncover factors characteristic of a specific case (Winegardner, 2001). This method focuses on descriptions and explanations. The researcher collected evidence to help with knowledge about individuals, groups, or organizations by asking how or why without having control of the event (Winegardner, 2001; Yin, 2014). Using case study research allowed the researcher to find out what is happening, assess the phenomena in a new light, compare the cases and seek new insights (Winegardner, 2001).

The present study employed a qualitative case study design, therefore the researcher established specific procedures to reduce bias in the interpretations of the findings including checks for credibility, validity and trustworthiness. This included dependability and confirmability audit, respondent validation/member checking, peer debriefing, and thick descriptions (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

The first method, respondent validation/member checking involved communicating with participants to solicit feedback and to check the accuracy of the thematically coded data (Maxwell, 2012). Sharing the researchers interpretations was another way of increasing validity because the participants had an opportunity to view the themes, interpretations and conclusions to check for accuracy (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This process helped rule out the possibility for misinterpreting participants' point of view while simultaneously identifying any researcher bias (Maxwell, 2012). Peer debriefing was also used to check for validity by creating opportunities for collaboration with colleagues and provided alternate interpretations of the data

collected (Hendricks, 2013). This process took place in the focus group where participants had an opportunity to listen to the responses of other participants and provide feedback based on their responses. Having dialogue with others as the data was collected and analyzed gave the researcher an opportunity to identify any possible biases and clarify interpretations (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). These methods were specific to increasing validity, which protected participants as well of the researcher from yielding false interpretations.

This qualitative research involved interviewing selected teachers and administrators. Therefore, it was important to choose methods that will strengthen validity (Hendricks, 2013), trustworthiness and credibility to increase the legitimacy of the findings. This process included using thick, detailed descriptions that resulted from the transcribed interviews and spending extensive time in the field with some of the participants to build relationships, while checking for any miscommunications (Creswell, 2007). The degree to which the qualitative researcher can convince the audience that his or her findings are worth paying attention to is the definition of trustworthiness (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). How credible the findings are varies depending on whether the researcher has established trustworthiness (Patton, 2015).

An impetus to qualitative research is the understanding that since researcher bias exist the researcher must be sure that findings are not in accordance with those pre-established biases. Combating these biases includes addressing them in the research and explaining how you plan on dealing with them (Maxwell, 2012). Part of the responsibility as a researcher was conducting the interviews. Specific procedures were followed to minimize potential bias that could influence the scope, topic and interpretation of the results in this research study. This required constant reflection of the researcher and an understanding of her own personal biases about the topic and utilized specific procedures to minimize the effect on data interpretations (e.g. member check,

considering rival explanations, participant triangulation) personal bias were minimized (Maxwell, 2012). Additionally, researchers can search for alternate explanations of the results from the data (Patton, 2015). The researcher established credibility by comparing data from another study and considering alternate conclusions. Patton (2015) discusses this as intellectual integrity and credibility. Another way the researcher established credibility was to validate the findings from another study. The researcher triangulated data from the Brown and Butty (1999) study and the interview question responses from both the teachers and administrators. Multiple data sources triangulated helped to corroborate evidence (Creswell, 2007; Hendricks, 2013). The researcher collected rich data in the form of 11individual semi-structured interviews and one focus group from which to draw qualitative conclusions.

Member checking was also employed to establish credibility to ensure the accuracy of the findings and the data (Patton, 2015). Participants had access to the thematic interpretations of the data to rule out any possibility of misinterpretations of the meaning of what was said during the interviews (Maxwell, 2012).

Triangulation of data also increases the credibility of the study's findings. The researcher used two methods to triangulate data in the present study. First, validating the findings through triangulation of data sources, and the interviews allowed the researcher to check the consistency of responses from various participants (Patton, 1999). The interviewer ensured that the findings were validated, which means the researcher determined the accuracy or credibility of the findings through member check, were employed throughout each phase by providing each participant and focus group with emergent themes to check for accuracy and agreement, on the themes and the interpretation of the data (Creswell, 2012; Maxwell, 2012). This process allowed participants to add further clarification or insights and confirm the accuracy of the findings.

Making connections, cross check responses and determine the accuracy and credibility of the data through triangulation allowed for corroborating the evidence from individual descriptions to find common themes among all participants (Creswell, 2012; Maxwell, 2013) and reduced personal biases. The researcher collected data from different sources using qualitative case study. The data was collected from past and present teachers and administrators in the New York City Department of Education.

Location and Participants:

This research took place in the New York City area, which has an enrollment of 1.1 million students in over 1,800 schools, making it the largest school district in the United States (New York City Department of Education, 2016). Participants were 11 past and present African American male teachers and principals in K-12 education. Three other participants were selected to participate in a focus group. Case study is a form of inquiry that is used in many situations to help with knowledge about an individual, particular groups, organizations and other related phenomena (Yin, 2014). This method of conducting qualitative research was useful when the researcher wanted to concentrate on a specific phenomenon and aims to uncover factors that are characteristic of it (Winegardner, 2001). Collecting evidence for case studies can come from various sources of evidence, including interviews, observations, documentation and physical artifacts (Yin, 2014).

Looking at the experiences of these African American male teachers and administrators in the New York City (K-12) public school system gave the researcher an opportunity to identify successes and barriers relevant their experiences as African American males in the public school system (Creswell, 2009). This study provided a deeper understanding of the participant's experiences about educational conditions that these teachers and administrators faced. The

research questions were organized to first understand the participants perceptions of their past experiences and possible connections to their choice to become educators and then to compare the views of the teachers to the administrators in this cross case analysis.

Summary

Creating a suitable methodology for this study was critical to the data collection. The researcher utilized specific procedures to ensure the chosen research design aligned with the data collection process, the research questions and the analysis of the data. To ensure this, the researcher first analyzed of a previous study conducted by Brown & Butty (1999). Looking at this study provided quantitative data about the perceptions of 140 African American male teachers working in the PGCPS (Prince George's County (Maryland) Public Schools between the years of 1993 and 1998. The conclusion of this study provided information about the need for an increase in minority teachers due to the changing demographics of the student population (Brown & Butty, 1999).

After this, the researcher used qualitative data collection procedures to corroborate the findings from the (Brown & Butty, 1999) study with her research. Collecting data included using semi-structured interview questions as a guide for the conversations with the participants. This approach allowed researcher to gather information through face-to-face interactions with participants and assess their views on their perceptions relevant to the experiences of African American males in public schools (Lapan et al., 2012).

In this case study, existing theories were used to guide the development of the research (Yin, 2014). Therefore, the following theories, Self Determination Theory (SDT), Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Deficit Thinking Theory (DTT) were used as a framework for the study. To understand the Black men's perception about their experiences growing up in public schools and

their experiences now as teachers or principals, these theories were used to formulate questions about interactions in school, their views about the structure of education and whether or not they felt supported as Black students and currently as teachers or principals.

In order to address the question, *what are the supports and restrictions of past and present African American male public school educators (master teachers and principals)?* the researcher used two case studies (teachers and principals) to conduct the research by interviewing participants from both groups then comparing the data collected. First, conducting interviews with teachers and principals enabled the researcher to ask questions about the Black male experience in school. This then led to transcribing and coding the data to find common themes. After this, a cross analysis of the teacher and principal data was used to compare the findings of each case. Using this case study research method allowed the researcher to look at specific factors related to each case and to assess the phenomena from a new light (Winegardner, 2001). When reporting and interpreting data, the researcher was ethical by minimizing personal biases to alter the findings through processes such as member check of the findings. Acknowledging personal biases prior to launching the research was a crucial step to remaining true to the research, the data collection and the interpretation of it.

Chapter IV: RESULTS

The qualitative case study research sought to understand the school experiences of 11 purposefully selected African American males, current or former teachers or administrators, as a way to determine the successes and barriers education had on their lives. This study specifically focused on what led participants to pursue and either remain or leave the New York City public K-12 school system.

Four main research questions directed this study:

1) What are the perceptions of eight African American male New York City's K-12 public teachers and three administrators about what constitutes educational supports and restrictions?

The sub-questions are:

2) What meaning do the teachers and administrators attach to education supports and barriers they faced growing up in the public school system?

3) What are potential changes that the participants suggest can be made to the teaching profession to support African American male students?

4) What were the commonalities and differences in the perceptions about supports and barriers for the teachers and administrators?

This chapter presents the four prominent themes that resulted from this study. First, there were 14 subthemes (codes) resulting from the qualitative interviews, which were then broken down into four major themes. Each theme was defined, given specific codes then followed with direct quotes to support the codes. These data are accompanied by narrative description of the conversation with participants. The transcripts of each teacher and administrator interview were coded through an open and In Vivo coding process in order to generate themes. The main

themes were then organized in a chart to help the researcher organize and make meaning of the data, using the Atlas TI software and are accompanied by a narrative description of the results.

A cross case analysis was used as a means of corroborating the qualitative former and current teacher data with the current and former administration data in order to obtain a more detailed understanding of each perspective. Additionally, triangulation of multiple perspectives, both former and current teacher and administrators' perspectives provided a way for the researcher to develop a more accurate representation of both perspectives. This method was used to generate ideas and to check the consistency of responses from various participants (Patton, 1999). The interviewer also validated the findings by determining the accuracy or credibility through member check by communicating with participants, soliciting feedback and checking the accuracy of the themes that emerged from the data collected (Maxwell, 2012). This process provided each participant with the four emergent themes and 14 sub-themes (codes) that resulted from the study to check for accuracy and agreement, on the themes and the interpretation of the data (Creswell, 2012; Maxwell, 2012) while providing participants an opportunity to add further clarification or insights and confirm the accuracy of the findings.

The researcher made connections and cross-checked responses to corroborate the evidence from individual descriptions and was able to find common themes among all participants (Creswell, 2012; Maxwell, 2013). The semi structured interview questions were collected from past and present teachers and administrators in the New York City Department of Education in this qualitative case study.

Findings:

The perception of each participant was document and coded for themes. Looking at the African American male school experience from their perspective showed several common barriers, which contribute to so few of them entering and remaining in the education profession.

Qualitative Data results.

The chapter begins with a discussion about the steps of this study, which is followed by a qualitative analysis of the participant interview responses. Next, the findings are presented and compose of four major themes. Each theme has several sub themes (codes) discussed in detail using a cross case analysis. Finally, the chapter ends with an overall analysis of the themes for the 11 African American male participants in this study.

Teacher Interviews. Obtaining individual stories about the teacher experience while growing up in public school, their college experiences and their current experiences as educators provided a more detailed picture of their perceptions of African American males in the public school system. The interview data in this study added with the growing body of knowledge about African American male educators entering the education field and helps answer the research question: *What are the perceptions of eight African American male New York City's K-12 public teachers and three administrators about what constitutes educational supports and restrictions?* In order to get a variety of perspectives, both current and former teachers were interviewed. Of the eight participating teachers, three of them left education to start an education technology company. The participants volunteered to be interviewed.

The teacher interview protocol comprised of 50 interview questions (see Appendix A). Some participants were asked less questions, depending on the nature of the conversation while others were asked additional follow up questions to expound on their thinking. In trying to obtain specific information about their school experiences and feelings about African American

males in education, some of the questions included: *Who was your most memorable teacher and why? Why did you decide to be a teacher? Do you think you were adequately prepared for this job? Why do you think there is a shortage of African American males in education?*

The interviews were a source of information for the research. Teacher interviews with the eight participating teachers generated over 200 pages of transcript data. Teachers were asked directly if they felt prepared when they entered the classroom for the first time and what they feel about the current state of African American male educators in education. Discussing the reasons and their thinking about education can help provide insights for how to make education more marketable to African American males in the future. In order to get a variety of perspectives, both current and former teachers were interviewed.

Administrator Interviews. Having conversations with administrators to ask about their experiences while growing up in public school, in college and their current experiences as educators also provided another perspective of African American males working in the public school system. Of the three administrators interviewed, one is working as a high school principal, one is working on the District level as a Physical Education coordinator and the other is a retired principal who currently owns a consulting company for improving the success rates of principals. The interview with them also added to the growing body of knowledge about African American male educators entering the education field. These men were presented with similar questions as the teachers, with some differences about their experiences as administrators, their feelings about African American males, and whether or not they actively hire them. They also provided answers to the research question: *What are the perceptions of eight African American male New York City's K-12 public teachers and three administrators*

about what constitutes educational supports and restrictions? In order to get a variety of perspectives, both current and former administrators were interviewed.

The interview protocol comprised of 52 interview questions (see Appendix B). Some participants were asked less questions, depending on the nature of the conversation while others were asked additional follow up questions to expound on their thinking. In trying to obtain specific information about their school experiences and feelings about African American males in education, some of the questions included: *Who was your most memorable teacher and why? Why did you decide to be a teacher? Do you think you were adequately prepared for this job? Why do you think there is a shortage of African American males in education?*

Administrator interviews with the three participants generated over 75 pages of transcript data. Administrators were asked directly why they feel African American teachers are not being hired and what their hiring practices are like. Discussing their thinking about education also helped provide insights for how to increase the amount of African American males they hire in their schools and ways to improve the education candidates seeking to become teachers in the future.

Results. The initial coding phase yielded 14 codes, which were a result of common responses from teacher and administrator participants. They included 1) Equitable Compensation 2) Low-socio Economic Status 3) Primary Provider 4) Additional Preparation/Support 5) Inadequate Preparation 6) Secondary Career Choice 7) Meaningful Impact 8) Extrinsic Motivation 9) Paternal Figure 10) Role Model/Mentor 11) Systematic Structures 12) Hiring Practices 13) Imbalances in Staff/Less African American Males 14) Inclusion/Additional Preparation. Codes were then merged based on similarities in the responses. After creating individual codes, the codes were placed into code groups, which were categories

of each code based on similarities. The researcher found common themes and combined the codes, resulting in four final code groups and themes for the study. The final code groups and themes were 1) Equitable Compensation, Low Socio-Economic status and Primary Provider. 2) Additional Preparation/Support, Inadequate Preparation and Secondary Career Choice. 3) Meaningful Impact, Extrinsic Motivation, Paternal Figure and Role Model/Mentor. 4) Systematic Structures, Hiring Practices, Imbalances in Staff/Less African American Males, Inclusion/Additional Preparation.

Table 2
Code names

Initial Codes	Operational Definition
Equitable Compensation	For this study, equitable compensation was operationally defined as how much money earns while working as a teacher or administrator and whether or not the pay compensates for the workload.
Low socio-economic status	For this study, low-socio economic status was defined as the financial status of participants' family in relation to other families.
Primary Provider	For this study, primary provider was operationally defined as person in the household who is mostly responsible for supporting all members of the household financially.
Additional Preparation/Support	Additional preparation/support was operationally defined as new teachers who needed additional support from both Education programs as well as administrators providing them with support after they are hired.
Inadequate Preparation	The operational definition for inadequate

	preparation was the lack of preparation teaching candidates received in undergraduate college programs.
Secondary Career Choice	For this study, secondary career choice describes participants who were not planning on becoming teachers after college.
Meaningful Impact	Meaningful impact was operationally defined as the influence teachers had on the students.
Extrinsic Motivation	For this study, extrinsic motivation was operationally defined as, former teachers in the participants' lives that were instrumental in being part of their success.
Paternal Figure	Paternal figure was operationally defined in this study as the role these educators play in the lives of the students they teach.
Role Model/Mentor	Role model/mentor as a code was defined as a teacher or administrator who has a positive influence on the students lives.
Systematic Structures	For the purposes of this study, systematic structures are operationally defined as systems in place that show the underrepresentation of African American male educators in the public school system.
Hiring Practices	For this study, hiring practices was operationally defined as strategies administrators used when hiring teachers.
Imbalances in Staff/Less African American Males	Imbalance in staff/less African American males was operationally defined as the small percentage of African American male educators there are in these particular public schools.
Inclusion/Additional Preparation	Inclusion/additional representation as a code was operationally defined as ways to improve the shortage of African American male educator.

The first code group had the themes Equitable Compensation, Low Socio-Economic Status and Primary Provider were organized under the construct of Equitable Compensation, which addressed the finances of these Black teachers and administrators. The second code group, had the themes Additional Preparation/Support, Inadequate Preparation and Secondary Career choice, which all addressed support or the lack of support these Black men received as students and educators. These were all categorized under the code group, Additional Preparation/Support. The third code group included the themes Meaningful Impact, Extrinsic Motivation, Paternal Figure and Role Model/Mentor. These were all placed under the category, Meaningful Impact and the final code group included Systematic Structures, Hiring Practices, Imbalances in Staff/Less African American Males and Inclusion/Additional Preparation were all categorized under Systematic Structures.

Table 3
Code Groups and Emergent Themes

The Group of Initial Codes	Final Four Emergent Themes
Equitable Compensation, Low Socio-economic Status, Primary Provider	**Equitable Compensation**
Additional Preparation/Support, Inadequate Preparation, Secondary Career Choice	**Additional Preparation/Support**
Meaningful Impact, Extrinsic Motivation, Paternal Figure, Role Model/Mentor	**Meaningful Impact**
Systematic Structures, Hiring Practices, Imbalances in Staff/Less African American Males, Inclusion/Additional Preparation	**Systematic Structures**

The first theme Equitable Compensation deals with how lucrative working as an educator is. For this study, it is operationally defined as how much money one earns while working as a teacher or administrator and whether the pay compensates for the workload.

Equitable Compensation. One of the most pervasive themes from the teacher and administrator interviews was equitable compensation. At the forefront of the conversation participants voiced their views about the salary not matching the job description for which teachers are hired. For example, one teacher, Toure stated, *"You know, if you paid more, you'd be attracting—you'd probably have like, I mean you'd probably have more Black people teaching if they had like more money to give, you know?"* For these African American male educators, salary was an important part of the conversation. Since these men grew up with families from low-mid socioeconomic statues and are currently financially responsible for their households, they chose professions that paid more in order to provide better lives for their children. Another teacher Kareem agreed with him when he said, *"Like if you graduate, like most Black males, if you talk about the disparity with high academics, when you graduate you want to make money, right? Because you come from—like you know, I made a joke saying like the typical Black male experience, but the reality of it is that the majority of Black males are like first generation, second generation graduates."*

Both teachers and administrators found that people don't view education as lucrative. According to the participants, teachers are undervalued and underpaid. The amount of work put in is not equivalent to the compensation received for the job they do. If these African American men desire is to make money when they grow up, education is not the field to enter. If the pay was more attractive, others will become educators.

Another teacher stated: *"And I think people don't look at it as lucrative. I think most people desire to make a lot of money in life and they've been told for so many years that educators don't make a lot of money, so why would I aspire to do something that's not going to make me rich? And that's what young people have a mindset of. I wanna do what makes me*

rich"~Kareem. DJ, a former principal agreed when he said, *"It's every major, it's every major profession that makes a lot of money. You can go to Fortune 500 companies, you can go to, I don't care, you can go to (pause) a place like Morgan Stanley. Again, less than ten percent."*

According to Kareem, Toure and DJ, money attracts people to any profession, particularly teaching. These men went through college, some with student loans, families and other financial responsibilities. They grew up, similar to other young people with the mindset of wanting to attain wealth. Teaching is not a lucrative career therefore making it less attractive to them. The conversation included having a good job but not getting paid enough money to do it. Other professions with equal schooling have much higher starting salaries. To increase the chances of making the profession more marketable includes increasing the salary.

Low socio-economic status. For this study, low-socio economic status was defined as the financial status of participants' family in relation to other families. This related to the participants' upbringing and them being classified by society as poor based on the yearly income of their entire household. Both teachers and administrators also expressed their socio-economic status growing up. In all 11 interviews, the comment was made about growing up either poor or middle class, which made them understand what it was like to see their parents struggle. As some are parents themselves, they are able to empathize with their students but they also used their struggles to help them make decisions about career choices. Participants also used this as a means to explain the teacher shortage because they believe that education should compensate their professionals so they will not have to struggle financially as adults. As one teacher Toure said it, *"I grew up poor and impoverished.* DJ, a former principal, described thinking he was middle class but realized later on they didn't have a lot of money but his parents made it appear as if they did. He realized he wasn't as well of as he thought when he couldn't afford going to

Hofstra University. He stated, *"We lived in multiple homes, but you know, as I've gotten older and started to understand what middle class was, financially I would redefine it and say we were probably more on the upper lower class because financially, we weren't, we weren't living, we didn't really have a lot of money. We had, my parents made sure that it appeared that way, but we didn't really have a lot of money."~DJ*

"And again, to go back to why being—I realized that I wasn't really middle class was because my parents didn't really have money to send us for Hofstra. Like the scholarship was the funds, and it was promised for the second year, but by then ___ wasn't really even prepared to handle the first year." ~DJ

When you grow up poor, and come from a single-family household, there is motivation to change the trajectory of your life as an adult. This upbringing was pivotal in choosing a career that enabled the men to become mentors, however the financial compensation does not make it attractive to those wanting to achieve more financially. Another teacher Mark stated, *"I grew up poor with a single mother and with one sister and two brothers in the household. And I grew up in Harlem until I was about ten and moved to the Bronx where I did my formative years until I got out of college."* Big Reg, another teacher recalled, *"Um (pause) coming from a different country, I really didn't understand what socioeconomic status was, but I think looking back and reflecting on my time growing up, I'd say poor to lower middle class at best."*

Of the eleven men interviewed, eight of them described growing up poor. They grew up in families that struggled financially. Understanding the plight of their students who are poor and impoverished was important for them connecting with students growing up with similar socio-economic statuses.

Working in impoverished neighborhoods in urban communities, both teachers and

administrators were able to identify with their students and the economic conditions they are growing up in. Considering this lens of growing up with financial struggles, they can understand one of the reasons for the shortage of African American male teachers. DJ, the former principal further stated, *"I think most people desire to make a lot of money in life."* Growing up poor, seeing the struggles of family, some from single parent households, once you have reached the milestone of completing college, you do not aspire to return to the same financial situation you grew up in.

Primary Provider. For this study, primary provider was operationally defined as person in the household who is mostly responsible for supporting all members of the household financially. This code focused on teaching not being lucrative and is not a popular career choice for African American men because of their role as primary providers in their households. For example, DJ stated: *"I just knew, I just wanted to be like my Pops, get up in the morning and go to work, take care of my family, live in a house, go on vacations and stuff like that."* People who desire to make money don't consider education to be a lucrative profession. When most Black males graduate from college, they are either first or second-generation graduates and providers for their families. They are more likely to choose a profession that pays well so they won't have to struggle with providing for their children. As DJ stated, *"The world looks different to me, to a person making less than a hundred thousand dollars. And _____ you know, you're making forty thousand, after you pay rent and you buy a couple of pair of sneakers or you take care of your family, you don't have anything left. So I think that's where men make their decisions."* Having this responsibility as African American males a role the men take seriously, especially after growing up and struggling as children. Now that they have their own families, choosing a career that pays six figures is much more lucrative than one that only pays $40,000 a year. DJ also said,

"*I can't be, I can't do something twenty years to make, you know, a little less than a hundred thousand. I need to make enough."*

It's a simple choice when having to decide whether to live paycheck to paycheck or to choose a career that's more lucrative. Since educators are not compensated, as they should be, decisions to do something that pays well makes more sense financially. Additionally he stated, "*People don't look at it as lucrative. I think most people desire to make a lot of money in life and they've been told for so many years that educators don't make a lot of money, so why would I aspire to do something that's not going to make me rich?"* Several teachers agreed with DJ's statements about not being compensated well as educators. One teacher, Kareem stated:

> *Like if you graduate, like most Black males, if you talk about the disparity with high academics, when you graduate you want to make money, right? Because you come from—like you know, I made a joke saying like the typical Black male experience, but the reality of it is that the majority of Black males are like first generation, second-generation graduates. I know my dad didn't graduate from college and I have friends whose parents didn't graduate from college, so I'm also speaking for experience but this is _____ like Black males have a gap between ____ so like when we graduate, like one of the things I wanted was to make money.*

According to him, graduating from college should equate to making money. Since most Black males are either first or second-generation graduates, the expectation is to make money once they leave college.

It is clear that these men believe socio-economic status and being the primary provider for their family not only plays a significant role in reasons African American males choose other

careers but are also strong driving forces behind the need to effect change in their communities so students can have additional representation of these men in their lives. A counter argument could be that growing up with a family from a low socio-economic status and now being the primary provider could work as a support for educators because being an educator can provide stability for them.

Additional Preparation/Support. Another prevalent theme was the need for additional support, which was operationally defined as new teachers needing additional support from both Education programs as well as teachers providing them with support after they are hired. In order for teachers to be successful in the classroom, they must feel supported. As Taj the teacher stated, *"that doesn't necessarily prepare you for the classroom. What that is, is just throwing you into the classroom."* Since colleges are not providing adequate training in the classroom, teachers are unprepared when they first enter the classroom on their own. Therefore, teachers are entering the classroom without enough training and understanding of the students they are working with.

After the initial coding phase, this theme of additional preparation and support was used as an overall description of two subtopics (codes), inadequate preparation and secondary career choice. Entering a classroom without having at least undergraduate experience student teaching can be challenging. Students who majored in Education during undergraduate years felt student teaching was not adequate preparation for what happens in the classroom. Another teacher Kareem agreed with him when he stated, *"So I think my undergrad experience did not prepare me in any way for teaching. Actually I wasted my time being there 'cause it wasn't a, I wasn't being an actual practitioner."* Secondary career choice teachers enter with less experience because they simply joined a program the expectation was to manage a classroom of students

with no preparation and support. These codes had similar ideas of teachers either not receiving adequate preparation in their undergraduate courses or not having enough experience because they switched careers and became educators and being thrown into the classroom without any practitioner experience.

Inadequate Preparation. The operational definition for inadequate preparation, according to this study is the lack of preparation teaching candidates receive in undergraduate college programs. During their first year of teaching, participants discussed having to learn how to teach and manage a classroom through trial and error. After participating in undergraduate programs, completing one or two semesters of coursework and a semester of student teaching was all the preparation the participants received. Eight participants equally discussed lack of preparation for teaching. According to DJ, the former principal, *"I don't think so. I think if a person was looking to be in a profession, I don't think having a semester or two of student teaching is enough. I think at least two to three years of student teaching to see how their skills are being developed, and to see how they're impacting. I don't think that having a half a year or a year is enough because in that year, you have to—you don't have much to compare it to."* Undergraduate programs teach the philosophy of teaching but are not equipping the teachers for teaching in urban settings and dealing with troubled students. These teachers are leaving college without understanding the true feel of how to deal with students that are emotionally charged. Taj agreed with DJ's statement when he stated, *"Absolutely not. Preparation for teachers consists of all of these things called in class where you would actually, you know, do lessons instead of the teacher or, you know, just watching a teacher."~Taj*

Diversification of the curriculum as well as the training is important. Additional preparation in the classroom, observing and being practitioners is important. Dallas, another

teacher recalled being hired after teaching in summer school, which was the only training he received prior to teaching for an entire year. He stated, *"Summer school, so I imagine regular, twenty-eight to thirty-two students in a classroom. Of course, you know, the teacher just sat down and, you know, whatever he did was probably grading or something and he just said, try to teach this lesson. So it was a rough, and it was probably two or three or four times out of the entire time there that I actually taught something. And pretty much after that summer was completed, they placed me to teach in front of my own class, full schedule and everything."* The requirements of summer school vary from the regular school year. Having taught only three or four times and being expected to survive an entire school year with multiple students was a huge task.

Changing the trajectory for teacher preparation in undergraduate programs is part of the conversation for teachers to feel successful. The college curriculum focuses on how to teach a generic group of students, without considering their economic backgrounds and upbringing. Taj, the teacher stated, you can have an amazing lesson but it won't mean anything if you cannot manage the class. Part of good instructional practice and feeling successful is being able to handle a variety of emotional breakdowns thorughout the day. Teachers need addtional time to learn strategies for dealing with students exhibiting difficult behaviors, which requires more than a semester of summer of being exposed to it. Taj, agreed with this statement when he said:

> *You can have an amazing lesson, but because your students are emotionally off, that whole lesson goes to nothing and it doesn't matter how well you've prepared nor how well you've orchestrated your lesson. If you cannot manage those kids, then a beautiful lesson will go to nothing. So um and this is why a lot of new teachers leave within the first year because they think it's about*

math or they think it's about their subject matter, but they don't realize that they have kids who have a lot on their mind that they're dealing with, and because, again, the stress of work, of just producing a beautiful lesson plan (laughs) and having all your supplies and having all of these things together is their main number one focus.

Jnupe recalled his first experience when applying for his first job as a teacher. He stated, *"Um universities don't prepare you for teaching in an urban setting at all, no. I first got my wings, I first started out in the South Bronx. I had a principal, she gave me a notepad and a pencil, and I came in midyear, and she said, "Teach. If you can survive this for two weeks, I'll hire you, I will hire you full time." And I kind of weathered the storm. I was again, back then it was like one of the worst schools in the Bronx."* Imagine being hired and the principal states, if you can survive then the job is yours. Imagine the feeling of a brand new teacher listening to the advice of a principal, a person who should be instrumental in helping you become successful. Conditions and supports from schools and administrators must improve. How can we change the trajectory of teaching, diversifying the teaching population and making it more attractive to African American males? The conversation must shift from throwing brand new teachers into the classroom without support to increasing the preparation by providing adequate practitioner training instead of them experiencing a huge culture shock when they realize the college classroom is completely varies greatly from managing an actual classroom.

Secondary Career Choice. For this study, secondary career choice was described as participants who were not planning on becoming teachers after college. Most of them switched careers, therefore having no experience with students prior to their first year of teaching. The consensus from these participants was that additional preparation and support is also needed for

practitioners entering the teaching profession as a secondary career choice. Mark, a teacher, changed careers because he felt teaching would be something rewarding. He stated, *"And if I think about it, I would have done it earlier, even though I had a great, I had a brilliant career in corporate America. I worked for myself and so much satisfaction from that." "I decided to become a teacher after a career in the private sector. I always wanted to teach and I just saw it as something that was very rewarding, unlike working for salary."* Leaving corporate America where the salary is much higher than working in education landed Taj, a former teacher, his first teaching job. He stated, *"Um I was coming from a different career path or job, I should say, not a career path. (laughs) And I was looking for something more out of all that I studied. I was in the credit card companies before and that wasn't working out for me, so I decided to go back for my master's, and in doing that, that's when I entered into the teaching aspect."* He wanted something more than what he studied. Toure, another former teacher also changed his career path and decided to become a teacher two weeks before graduation. While riding the train, he saw an advertisement, which made him consider entering the profession. He stated, *"The only time, the first time I thought I would be a teacher was just maybe two weeks before graduation and I was on a train and they had one of those Teaching Fellows commercials, like "You remember your first grade teacher's name? Who's going to remember yours?"* Peter, a principal also stumbled upon teaching accidentally. He stated, *"I think as I mentioned the last time that we met, it was almost out of accident, it was almost like I was the accident to teaching because of a different goal, at least a career goal. I ended up in the field of teaching, I wanted to basically teach college math, I wanted to be a professor and in order to do that, I know I needed more education so I had to go back to school."*

Switching careers and making the decision to become teachers was something several participants experienced. This meant, they did not have any undergraduate experience working with studetns. These men were also thrown into the classroom without the necessary preparation needed to manage student behavior. Additonal support is needed for those choosing teaching as a secondary career choice.

Meaningful Impact. Meaningful impact, another emerging theme was operationally defined as the influence the teachers have on students. When asked about reasons for entering the teaching profession, both teachers and administrators mentioned the positive impact and influence they have as educators. This common language resulted in the theme meaningful impact. Under this umbrella were three sub code groups: extrinsic motivation, paternal figure and role model/mentor. Similarities of participant responses led to this interpretation of the theme. Satisfaction, passion and impact were some key phrases used. As Mark, the teacher said, *"There—it's a great satisfaction to live in the neighborhood and see my fellow students—my former students and current students. Everybody that teaches knows that when you're a teacher and you're a good teacher, you're a rock star."*

The influence of an educator and yield positive results in a students lives. Some influences are so strong that children aspire to be just like that teacher when they get older. This was the case for DJ, the former principal. He recalled having a teacher who loved his job. He stated, *"I learned his passion and how much he loved what he did. So it became a desire of mine to be just as impactful and influential as he was."~DJ*

While reflecting, Kareem, a teacher, considered how having Black educators had a subconscious influence on his life. He thought about the meaningful impact caring teachers have when he stated, *"I think that I would want more—now I think I would want more Black*

educators educating me 'cause even in these questions, I realize the subconscious influence that they had on me even getting into education or how they had like just some sort of efficacy towards like being—not efficacy but being passionate towards, caring about me, like Black educators, even though they were very strict, I've always—they were indicators of them just showing us like sense of caring. And then I also probably would have went to a better elementary school to build stronger foundational skills." He further discussed the positive influence he had on his students and them looking up to him as a big brother.

Big Reg felt there was no greater calling than being a teacher, not because of the economic gains but because of the lives he continues to touch daily. He spoke about the meaningful impact he has on students and stated, *"In reference to a similar question previously, like I wouldn't change anything. Um (pause) teaching has afforded me the ability to make a meaningful impact on the lives of students and I don't think there is any better calling. I could have done a lot more and varied things, be more economically advanced, but that's not, that's not (pause) who I am, I guess."~Big Reg*

Extrinsic Motivation. For this study, extrinsic motivation was operationally defined as former teachers in the participants' lives that were instrumental in being part of their success. When asked about key influencers in their lives, participants rarely remembered the name of the teacher with the most influence yet they were able to describe in detail the specific scenario that left an indelible impact on their lives. Therefore, yielding the theme extrinsic motivation. This theme focused on a feeling participants felt during childhood that they can still remember today. Mark, a teacher recalled an elementary school teacher that took him under her wings and another African American male band teacher. He stated, *"I remember having an elementary school teacher, a Black woman, an African American woman named Miss Daniels, and she was just*

very caring and very inspiring, and I think I had her either in the fifth grade, fifth or sixth grade, and she stuck out in my head, and she sticks out from that perspective. I had another, another orchestra teacher who was a very dynamic guy also, who was an African American male" Of all the teachers he encountered, these two left lasting impressions on him because of how caring and inspiring they were. Students have moments of discouragement and in those times it is crucial to have someone to look out for them. According to DJ,*"I think just like everybody else, they become discouraged when they don't see the light at the end of the tunnel. And there's not enough people to sit down and to basically mentor you and to tell you what's out there and what's better than what you can do after."*

Mark recalled a band teacher that took him under his wing and helped him to get into a specialized high school. *"I would say that just out of a coincidence, I had a band teacher that, when I was in middle school, and he was a guy who almost took me under his wing. It was his guidance that got me into LaGuardia, so I would have to say him because of that leap into a specialized high school."* This extrinisc motivation is crucial and necessary to have the right influences around these students, especially the struggling ones.

Paternal Figure. Paternal figure was operationally defined in this study as the role these educators play in the lives of the students they teach. Since single parent homes are prevalent in urban communities and students are growing up with just one parent, more than likely their maternal parent, it leaves a gap for young boys who do not have paternal figures at home. Knowing this, male participants pride themselves in filing in the gap and using themselves as mentors for students without father figures at home. John, a teacher stated, *"I work in a community where there's a lack of fathers in the household. And I think that hiring these African American males would be a great plus in that community."* Mark, another teacher agreed with

him when he said, *"Definitely a male figure, father figure. So many young, especially our population, so many young guys who don't have fathers at home or women raising their kids."* Knowing this drive the teacher-student interaction with these students and gives kids an opportunity to look up to their teacher or administrator as the father figure in their lives.

According to Jnupe, a teacher, "*Um even parents, like you know, they're more open and honest with me in what they don't have in their home, and like seeing me as like a father figure to their son or daughter, you know, helps them (pause) helps them better educate themselves and their, and their children. So it's, honestly it's been, it's been a blessing."*

Role Model/Mentor. Role model/mentor as a code was defined as a teacher or administrator who has a positive influence on the students lives. They are people the students look up to and aspire to be like when they grow up. This code alongside with the others was a driving force for participants teaching. Student aspirations typically include an athlete, singer, musician or actor. Having someone to look up to besides rappers were instrumental for them as teachers and administrators. DJ, the former principal said, African American children need role models to help them when they are discouraged. He stated,*"You know, I think that they don't have the necessary, the necessary role models or mentors to walk them through that process. I think just like everybody else, they become discouraged when they don't see the light at the end of the tunnel."*

This influence is strengthened when students realize the teachers and administrators care. One major reason for becoming successful is not necessarily having a teacher who is excellent with content but masters compassion. Kareem talked about this influence and how he would have wanted more African American male educators growing up. He stated, *"I think that I would want more—now I think I would want more Black educators educating me 'cause even in these*

questions, I realize the subconscious influence that they had on me even getting into education or how they had like just some sort of efficacy towards like being—not efficacy but being passionate towards, caring about me, like Black educators, even though they were very strict, I've always—they were indicators of them just showing us like sense of caring. And then I also probably would have went to a better elementary school to build stronger foundational skills."~Kareem

All participants discussed being influential in their students' lives and shaping their future towards the right path for success. Chris, an administrator stated, *"I love working with students, and my, my past experience as an officer and my current experience in administration allows me to help mentor these kids and help them grow in a lot of different areas. Some areas that others can't see, I can see, especially when you know that a kid is living in a shelter or they live in the 'hood, and you know how to relate to them or you can help—once they get on the inside of this building, you become a father figure, you become an uncle."*

The rewards of mentoring includes having a child stating, I want to be like you when I grow up. One of the most memorable experiences Big Reg recalled was having a kindergarten student saying she wants to become a physical education teacher when she grows up. He stated, *"Most memorable experience. (long pause) I have a (pause) last year I had a kindergarten student (laughs) in phys ed and she's a tiny little thing. And she's full of energy and she's loads of fun and she's articulate and she tries really hard, and after class one day, the end, the end of the day, her parents came to me and they said, "What did you do?" "What are you talking about?" They said, "This girl is going on about she wants to be a physical education teacher!" (laughs) So (laughs) and that was really awesome."*

The influences of having African American male educators/mentors is greater than being in the classroom. T'challa recalled his most memorable teacher being the one that looked like

him. He stated, *"The most memorable teacher wasn't because he was this great instructor. I think it was because I saw myself in him."* Peter, an administrator felt his influence was greater with males but mostly African American males because they see him as the person in charge. He stated, *"The males in general but the African American males to a large degree because they get to see another Black man come to work everyday in a shirt and tie and that Black man runs the show."*

Mark recalled always wanting to be a teacher. He was always passionate about mentoring younger guys in his neighborhood. *"I always wanted to teach. I, I've had a history of sports and working, when I went to college working with Boys and Girls Club. And mentoring younger guys behind me in the neighborhood. And so I always had this inclination to be a leader and a teacher."* Taj talks about his role as a big brother. *"And then the other perspective is as a, as a mentor, as a kind of like a big brother or (pause) just a teacher, you know, you know, I can help you see things if you're willing to look at what I'm showing you, you know?"* Students can identify with me, JNupe stated because sometimes they just admire the way I dress. I wear Jordan's and they say, "that's fresh Mr." that alone fosters a connection without even saying a word.

Systemic Structures. For the purposes of this study, systematic structures were operationally defined as systems in place that show the underrepresentation of African American male educators in the public school system. This theme focused on the codes of hiring practices, imbalance of staff/less African American males and Inclusion/Additional Representation. When searching for common ideas, these were part of the larger conversation of why African American men are rarely represented as educators. Many factors influence decisions about where one should work but considering the reasons behind the shortage is important to developing

strategies to increase the representation in public schools. Shifts in systematic structures were constantly brought up in multiple conversations with participants. Each participant represented schools with a handful of African American males. Considering ways to increase the representation was part of the conversation.

Hiring Practices. For this study, hiring practices was operationally defined as strategies administrators use when hiring teachers. This code was a result of comments about improving hiring practices included not having a pool of African American males to select from. One of the main questions raised was, how can administrators hire African American males if they are not applying for jobs as educators? Several participants mentioned this an issue with having African American male educators. One of the issues is the small pool of selection for African American males. If more were available for hire, there will be additional ones teaching in the public schools. For example, Mark stated, *" I would say yes if they were available, but I have not, over the years, seen a lot of African American males that have been hired."* There is a teacher shortage across the board, DJ says but because they aren't out there, doesn't mean you can't consider ways to include them into the school setting. He stated,*"Yes, and you know what's really crazy about that? Um during the hiring process, there weren't a lot of them available. I wasn't getting a lot of resumes. However, I came up with what I thought probably the most important contribution I made as a principal, is I hired many school aides for the teaching assistant."*

While working as a principal, he recognized a shortage in African American male teachers applying for jobs so he came up with a plan to recruit them. *"So I realize that because they aren't out there, it doesn't mean that you limit yourself to saying, oh, there's just no Black male teachers. But there's Black males in your community. What are you doing to recruit them*

into your school or into the workforce to then give them—You become what you see. If you've never seen a Black male in education, why would you desire to be one?"~DJ. Going out into the community and deliberately finding a way to incorporate them into the school paid off for him. The representation was present in his school because he hired them as teacher's aides under the conditions that they will return to college and graduate with a degree and they must show up to work daily with a shirt and tie. This created opportunities for these men to get their foot in the door, grow, become successful teachers and one even excelling and becoming a principal. This strategy worked in his favor because he encouraged African American men, who probably never considered teaching to enter the teaching profession while simultaneously increasing their representation in the school.

Some principals, similar to DJ are deliberate in seeking and hiring African American males. Taj agreed with this when he stated, *"I think my principal hired me because, one, I was Black.* Other principals, however hire based on their ideals, which doesn't always match the demographics of the students in the community. Toure stated,*"Because I also served at a school, and that school for like a year and a half was also a White principal, where that was really a concern of where it was like noticed that for a long period of time, she hired mainly White people. So it was as if the hiring practices more reflect the principal's idea more than just like the demographics of the students community, and it makes a big difference.*

Both Toure and Kareem, former teachers, believe having similar experiences growing up makes students connect with teachers more becasue they can understand what their students are going through. If the adult hired cannot relate to the expriences or have stereotypical beliefs about the students, it is not beneficial for the student/teacher interaction and experience. Toure stated, "*The last school I taught at, it was a school in my neighborhood. ____ the kids were ____*

outside school and like I understand the experiences the kids are having in the neighborhood, you know, also having similar upbringing to a lot of these kids, and it does make a difference compared to like just hiring somebody from a ____ where we have grown up in like a suburb _____ or had a whole different school experience themselves, you know? Kareem continued when he shared his experience about a principal hiring teachers based on her personal preferences as opposed to the matching the demographics of the school. He recalled the teacher turnover rate being extremely high because the teachers had difficulty relating to the students. He stated, *It was like, it was just these people, they were (laughs) (pause) there were teachers that were hired were not from the neighborhood, were not even from the borough. Um (pause) she would hire them without creating a hiring team, so she was making these decisions in isolation, with either maybe another AP, so like she hired a White AP that didn't match the demographic or wasn't—didn't match the demographic or reflective of the population, and the thing about it which was unfortunate is that because things didn't work and the turnover rate of teachers was so high, it was almost like she was forced to start hiring more people of color and wasn't doing that from the beginning. So it wasn't like listening to other people's advice. It was just teachers keep leaving."*

Imbalance Staff/Less African American Males. Imbalance staff/less African American males was operationally defined as the small percentage of African American male educators there are in these particular public schools. When looking at the population of African American male educators in school, the representation is limited. This has been an ongoing problem for many years in education. Mark stated, *"I really don't remember having African American male teachers."* The demographic of teachers is predominantly Caucasian women. Baron, another teacher, shared his thoughts about one of the issues about this phenomenon. He stated, *"I think*

the Black male has been traumatized from being in the public school system that if you operate from a place of trauma, you don't wanna go back to that place 'cause if you think about like the high suspension rates and like targeting and over-policing of Black males in school. I'm not talking about outside the institute, I'm talking about in school itself." DJ believes the teacher shortage is not just with Black men but there is an impact across the board. He discussed the idea that Black men are always in the minority and the shrinking pool exacerbates the shortage. He stated, *"We're losing, we're losing generations of teachers of all ethnicities because of it being less, less glamorous and I think that when—being Black males have always been a minority, when the pool shrinks, it's going to look even worse for them. I think we've ever had a (pause) an abundance of male, Black male teachers ever."*

Inclusion/Additional Representation. Inclusion/additional representation as a code was operationally defined as ways to improve the shortage of African American male educators. This code also coincided with the theme of systematic structures. Entering a school with only two Black male educators for an entire school population of minority students shows a need for additional representation. Baron, the teacher said, *"The only Black male educators were my brother and I. (pause) And then maybe like two years later, they hired another science guy and then a year later, another math guy who was Black."* Across the board there is a shortage of Black male teachers. Combatting this requires thinking of strategies to make education more marketable to the intended audience. This requires a paradigm shift in the thinking of the look of teachers, the salary earned in the profession and the level of respect they receive from the community. A huge portion of this entails treating educators as they do other professions by increasing the salary educators receive. Dallas stated, *"I think that if we are serious about getting*

more Black male teachers into the classroom there needs to be concerted effort first around budgeting for these preparation programs.

Additionally, preparation programs must adhere to the needs of the practitioner by having extended periods of training in the setting. Other professions require internship hours prior to being thrust into the field independently. Baron stated, "*So for instance, we should treat it similar to like a medical field where one (pause) Black males are doing some apprenticeship at the schools that they may particularly be entering or _____ populations that are similar, and longer apprenticeships too."* Teachers receive hands training for a semester of college, if they enroll in a teacher program then after they graduate they are expected to survive on their own.

Table 4
Teacher Interview Theme similarities and differences to Administrator Interview Themes

Teacher Interview Themes	Administrator Interview Themes
Equitable Compensation	**Equitable Compensation**
Think about any other profession, if they started paying doctors less money, you wouldn't have people spending fifteen years through a medical degree and all these residencies to ____ all these great doctors floating to the top, right? It's because of the money why you have top talent. (Toure)	If we went to college, we went to college to make a lot of money, so whether it's to become a lawyer, a doctor, you'll find more Black males in those other areas, but still when you, when you factor in the percentage, it's still the same. There's probably the same percentage of Black male lawyers as there are Black male teachers.
I grew up poor with a single mother and with one sister and two brothers in the household. And I grew up in Harlem until I was about ten and moved to the Bronx where I did my formative years until I got out of college.(Mark)	How would you describe your socio-economic status growing up? I would decribe it as poor.
Like if you graduate, like most Black males, if you talk about the disparity with high academics, when you graduate you want to make money, right? Because you come from—like you know, I made a joke saying like the typical Black male experience, but the reality of it is is that the majority of Black	I can't be, I can't do something twenty years to make, you know, a little less than a hundred thousand. I need to make enough.

males are like first generation, second generation graduates.

Additional Preparation/Support

So I think my undergrad experience did not prepare me in any way for teaching. Actually I wasted my time being there 'cause it wasn't a, I wasn't being an actual practitioner. (Kareem)

I think my colleagues are, as well as myself in the beginning, are just not prepared to work with students from low income, students with disabilities, students with just a ton of problems. And not to their fault, you know? (John)

Additional Preparation/Support

I don't think so. I think if a person was to teach because of a different goal, looking to be in a profession, I don't think having a semester or two of student teaching is enough. I think at least two or three years of student teaching to see how their skills are being developed, and to see how they're impacting. I don't think that having a half a year or a year is enough because in that year, you have to—you don't have much to compare it to. (DJ)

Um I was coming from a different career path or job, I should say, not a career path. (laughs) And I was looking for something more out of all that I studied. I was in the credit card companies before and that wasn't working out for me, so I decided to go back for my master's, and in doing that, that's when I entered into the teaching aspect. (Taj)

I think as I mentioned the last time we met, it was almost out of accident, It was almost like I was an accident to teaching because of a career goal. I ended up in the field of teaching, I wanted to a basically teach college math, I wanted to be a professor and in order to do that, I know I needed more education so I had to go back to school. (Peter)

Meaningful Impact

I would say that just out of a coincidence, I had a band teacher that, when I was in middle school, and he was a guy who almost took me under his wing. In reference to a similar question previously, like I wouldn't change anything. Um (pause) teaching has afforded me the ability to make a meaningful impact on the lives of students and I don't think there is any better calling. I could have done a lot more and varied things, be more economically advanced, but that's not, that's not (pause) who I am, I guess.

I work in a community where there's a lack of fathers in the household. And I think that hiring these African

Meaningful Impact

I learned his passion and how much he loved what he did. So it became a desire of mine to be just as impactful and influential he was.

But because not only did I run the gamut and I became a school leader

American males would be a great plus in that community.

as a Black male, so I became that Influence that they saw that they can attain to be, and I didn't sugarcoat anything. I shared with them how hard it was, I shared with them that it can be possible. But I also shared with them the glory that comes along with it, which is you've made a huge impact as a Black male in a Black community.

I think that I would want more—now I think I would want more Black educators educating me 'cause even in these questions, I realize the subconscious influence that they had on me even getting into education or how they had like just some sort of efficacytowards like being—not efficacy but being passionate towards, caring about me, like Black educators, even though they were very strict, I've always—they were indicators of them just showing us like sense of caring. And then I also probably would have went to a better elementary school to build stronger foundational skills.

I gave him the requirements (pause) Mr. C. went, got his teaching certification, became a literacy math coach, he's now an assistant principal in Mount Vernon. And on top of that, I'm also a college professor, and I was teaching a school district leadership course, and who ends up being in my class but Mr. C. So he's able, I'm able to look at him and say, here's an example of what I molded from the ground up, and I see the impact it has made.

Systematic Structures

So are they more or less prone to hire African American males? I would say yes if they were available, but I have not, over the years, seen a lot of African American males that have been hired.

Systematic Structures

Yes, and you know what's really crazy about that? Um during the the hiring process, there weren't a lot of them available. I wasn't getting a lot of resumes. However, I came up with what I thought probably the most important contribution I made as a principal, is I hired many school aids for the teaching assistant.

I work in a community where there's a lack of fathers in the household. And I think that hiring these African American males would be a great plus in that community.

So I realize that because they aren't out there, it doesn't mean that you limit yourself to saying, oh there's just no Black male teachers. But there's Black males in your community. What are you doing to recruit them into your school or into the workforce to then give them—You become what you see. If you've never seen a Black male in

education, why would you desire to be one?

You want the kids to have good teachers. But it should reflect as I see it like people from the community, and it makes a big difference. The ___ last school I taught at, it was a school in my neighborhood. ____ the kids were ____ outside school and like I understand the experiences the kids are having in the neighborhood, you know, also having similar upbringing to a lot of these kids, and it does make a difference compared to like just hiring somebody from a ____ where we have grown up in like a suburb _____ or had a whole different school experience themselves, you know?

But now we have a teacher shortage and so being a minority really stands out. But it's more than just us. It's a profession _____because whether you're in Oklahoma, in Chicago and other places where right now they're operating with not enough teachers, that says to me that it's more than African American males. It's a bigger problem with teaching and how it's become less desirable to become a teacher.

I really don't remember having African American male teachers.

We're losing, we're losing generations of teachers of all ethnicities because of it being less, less glamorous and I think that when—being Black males have always been a minority, when the pool shrinks, it's going to look even worse for them. I think we've ever had a (pause) an abundance of male, Black male teachers ever.

About how many African American male teachers did you have in school from K to twelve? I would (long pause) I would probably have to say three (pause) that I can truly recall. I mean, first of all, (pause) some, some (pause) that in order for you to be served (pause) adequately, you need appropriate representation. So if there is, across the board, if there is a hiring practice in a school of a particular demographic of kids and the staff does not meaningfully represent what those kids look like, there is usually—let me not say usually, but there tends to be a certain disconnect and/or wall of distrust, which teachers have to work extra hard to try to overcome and students are extra reserved because they're not used to a certain group.

I think it's more (pause) you become what you see most of, what you see most of in your community, you know? Most prominent Black males move out of the community after they reach a certain status anyway, so what does a young person have to look towards being?

Summary

The information gathered from this study helped to create a picture of some of the African American male viewpoints as educators in the New York City Public School system. Both teacher and administrator interviews captured the perceptions of and viewpoints of the participants. Merging the interview data provided the researcher with an emerging picture of successes and barriers of African American male educators in the public school system. In general, both past and present teachers and administrators believe that for there to be an increase in African American male educators, it is necessary to make the education field more attractive to them by providing them with equitable compensation, which was operationally defined as the amount of money the teacher earns while working and providing them with additional preparation/support, which was operationally defined as improving the support new teachers received both from Education programs and administrators once they are hired. Both teachers and administrators in this study believed that starting from the influences in school, African American male students need to see positive role models who resemble them in the classroom setting (Bristol, 2015; Delpit, 2006; Noguera, 2003), need positive experiences, such as being placed in honors programs, as opposed to the overrepresentation in special education (Holzman, 2012), positive behavior incentives as opposed to punishment and expulsion, which ultimately lead to academic failure (Holzman, 2012). When students encounter more positive role models that resemble them, it increases the relatability level between the teacher and the student. As J'nupe, the teacher mentioned in his interview, students can identify with him just because of the way he dresses. He stated, I wear Jordan's and they say, "*that's fresh Mr*." that alone fosters a connection without even saying a word.

Equitable Compensation

It is also necessary to change the marketing strategies of attracting educators to the field. As Dallas stated, *"I think that if we are serious about getting more Black male teachers into the classroom there needs to be concerted effort first around budgeting for these preparation programs."* Current teachers stated they are passionate about teaching but would rather see the changes of additional teacher support and increase in pay will keep them in the profession. Past teachers discussed negative experiences with administrators as well as wanting an increase in salary as reasons they left and why they are no longer teachers in the New York City public school education system. One former principal mentioned money as a major barrier, which was one of the major reasons he left the education profession. He has since doubled his salary since venturing out on his own as a consultant. Of the other two current administrators, one is ready to retire next year while the other feels he has about 7 years left on the job.

The results show their ideas of how to make teaching more marketable and ways to attract and retain additional teachers, especially African American males. As DJ, the former principal, stated earlier, African American children need role models to help them when they are discouraged. He stated,*"You know, I think that they don't have the necessary, the necessary role models or mentors to walk them through that process. I think just like everybody else, they become discouraged when they don't see the light at the end of the tunnel."* The results also showed that the participants had at least one African American male as a teacher that had an impact on their lives. The idea that there should be positive experiences for African American male students in school and role models that resemble them seems to continue (Bristol, 2015; Delpit, 2006; Noguera, 2003).

Teachers' ideas of how to increase the presence of African American male teachers were similar to the administrator responses. Teachers believe that to make education more attractive

there must be a systematic change across the board. Some examples of these changes include making education more lucrative. As Kareem, the teacher stated earlier *"And I think people don't look at it as lucrative. I think most people desire to make a lot of money in life and they've been told for so many years that educators don't make a lot of money, so why would I aspire to do something that's not going to make me rich? And that's what young people have a mindset of. I wanna do what makes me rich."* DJ, the former administrator agreed with him when he stated, *"It's every major, it's every major profession that makes a lot of money. You can go to Fortune 500 companies, you can go to, I don't care, you can go to (pause) a place like Morgan Stanley. Again, less than ten percent."* Treating educators differently by increasing their pay is one of the critical steps for improving the chances of African American males entering the profession. Other strategies include providing additional preparation/support for these men when they become teachers (Bristol, 2015; Irvine & Fenwick, 2011). According to DJ, the principal, *"I think if a person was looking to be in a profession, I don't think having a semester or two of student teaching is enough. I think at least two to three years of student teaching to see how their skills are being developed, and to see how they're impacting. I don't think that having a half a year or a year is enough because in that year, you have to—you don't have much to compare it to."*

Additional Preparation/Support

In trying to address the reasons for the percentages of African American male educators, there was a list of barriers that prevent them from entering and remaining in the profession. After the desegregation of schools in 1954, the percentage of Black teachers, particularly male public schools teachers has steadily decreased (Taylor et al., 2009). This significant loss of Black educators resulted in black students having minimum encounters with teachers or role

models that look like them (Wilder, 2000). Educational reform is therefore necessary to increase the diversity of the overwhelmingly White and female teaching population (Vavrus, 1995). Both teachers and administrators were honest about their experiences as students and educators. They also agreed that earlier exposure, increasing the salary and providing additional support will increase the number of educators becoming teachers. Participants viewed additional preparation and support as a barrier for educators because they did not feel adequately prepared when they entered the classroom as teachers. John, a teacher supported this statement when he discussed a need for better preparation in college courses. He stated, "*I was prepared with philosophy aspect of it, but I was not prepared for the population of students that I was going to teach*." He continued when he said, "*I think my colleagues are, as well as myself in the beginning, are just not prepared to work with students from low income, students with disabilities, students with just a ton of problems. And not to their fault, you know?"*

The insights from the interviews of both teachers and administrators provided answers to the main research question about supports and barriers for African American male educators in New York City public schools. Both teachers and administrators believed that undergraduate education programs failed to prepare them for the real world. Although they had exposure to content, they were not adequately prepared for teaching independently. As Kareem stated, *"I think my undergrad experience did not prepare me in any way for teaching. Actually I wasted my time being there 'cause it wasn't a, I wasn't being an actual practitioner."*

Meaningful Impact

The results of this theme were based on role models/mentors who had an indelible impact on the participants. Both teachers and administrators were able to think of at least one Black teacher that left a lasting impression on them. One teacher, Kareem stated, *"I would say that just*

out of a coincidence, I had a band teacher that, when I was in middle school, and he was a guy who almost took me under his wing." Another teacher, John discussed working in a community where single parent families are prominent. He stated, *"I work in a community where there's a lack of fathers in the household. And I think that hiring these African American males would be a great plus in that community."* DJ, a former administrator shared how he used his influence as a building leader to influence other Black males in the community. He shared one particular story about a young man he hired from the community. He recalled, *"I gave him the requirements. Mr. C. went, got a teaching certification, got his bachelor's, got his teaching certification, became a literacy math coach, he's now an assistant principal in Mount Vernon. I'm able to look at him and say, here's an example of what I molded from the ground up, and I see the impact it has made."*

Systematic Structures

Teachers and administrators believe changes in systematic structures, including hiring practices will also change the representation of African American males in education (Noguera, 2003). While working as a principal, DJ recognized a shortage in African American male teacher applicants so he devised plan to recruit them. *"So I realize that because they aren't out there, it doesn't mean that you limit yourself to saying, oh, there's just no Black male teachers. But there's Black males in your community. What are you doing to recruit them into your school or into the workforce to then give them—You become what you see. If you've never seen a Black male in education, why would you desire to be one?"* This includes increasing the interest in becoming educators from an earlier point and having better preparation in college classes to change the trajectory of the rates of these males being interested in the field. When asked about the Black male teacher representation in the school, Mark said, *"I would say yes they would hire*

them if they were available, but I have not, over the years, seen a lot of African American males that have been hired." Kareem felt a structural system change that is necessary is to deliberately increase the number of Black males being hired. He stated, *"You want the kids to have good teachers. But it should reflect as I see it like people from the community, and it makes a big difference."*

Chapter V: Conclusions

First, one must consider the complexities of the community in which African American males grow up and the notion that they are graduating at much lesser rates than their White counterparts. Understanding African American males, their experiences in school, their graduation rates and the school-to-prison pipeline system is crucial for educators. Increasing the role models for African Americans they see in their communities are some of the first steps in formulating a plan to change the narrative success rates in school and retaining them as educators. Even though this is not a blueprint to increasing the number of educators in the public school system, understanding teachers and administrators' feelings initiates the continuous conversation about necessary changes to increase African American educators in the public school system.

In this chapter the researcher highlights the results of the cross-case analysis comparing the views of teachers and administrators. This is followed by a summary of the results associated with each of the research questions. These results were then organized into a succinct theory of the experiences of African American male teachers and administrators including the supports and barriers they experienced and their views of how to make the field of education more rewarding. Finally, implications for the profession were presented, followed by possible changes for future supports. The researcher then draws conclusions, presents recommendations for future research and lists study limitations and states the impact the study has on education.

Findings from this study support the research about the limited representation of African American males in public school education (Bristol, 2015). Today, only two percent of the six million teachers entering the profession are Black men (Bristol, 2015). This significant

underrepresentation is in contrast to White teachers who comprise about 73% of the workforce in the inner city (Brown & Butty, 1999).

Participants, both teachers and administrators felt there are specific factors that contribute to the scarcity of African American male educators. One major perspective was that African American males need additional preparation and support when they enroll in teacher programs or are teaching as a secondary profession. Participants felt that teachers are not adequately prepared for the classroom. Consequently, this lack of preparation can lead to difficult first year experiences because of the lack of training needed to work with struggling students. It is therefore necessary to develop additional programs to help support male teachers make a smooth transition into teaching.

One such program, the Boston Teacher Residency Male Educators of Color Network (Bristol, 2015) provides support African American males receive when starting off as new teachers. Created in 2003, this post baccalaureate program served the purpose of increasing African American male teacher retention within the Boston Public School system by providing training and certification with the stipulation of a three-year commitment to teaching (Bristol, 2015). Additionally, monthly professional development opportunities were created for these men to decrease racial tensions of hiring, reduce the high teacher turnover rate for male teachers of color and to improve their school experiences. The premise of this was based on the idea that male teachers of color face unique challenges, which can be combatted if they work with other teachers of color facing similar experiences to help them develop the necessary strategies and tools to be successful (Bristol, 2015). The focus of the monthly meetings was twofold: The first aspect was socio-emotional, which gave participants opportunities to discuss challenges male teachers of color face, including being the only male teacher of color and how to respond to

stereotypical roles colleagues asked these men to play, such as policing black and Latino boys. The second aspect dealt with ways to improve teacher practice (Bristol, 2015). Creating an opportunity for socio-emotional support for male teachers of color and a space to reflect on practices was the mission of this program. Monthly meetings were purposeful with specific goals. This additional support was necessary because according to teachers and principals, undergraduate programs only taught them the philosophy of teaching but did not give them adequate hands on experience in the classroom.

Similarly, New York City adapted a mentorship program with the aim of diversifying the teaching force. Since male students of color represent 43 percent of the New York City public school enrollment yet only 8.3 percent of New York City teachers are men of color (Fink, 2016; Pennamon, 2018), in 2015, Mayor Bill deBlasio launched the New York City Men Teach program with the purpose of adding 1,000 Black, Latino and Asian men to the city's teaching force by 2018. The premise of this program is to increase the retention of teachers of color by creating mentorship support by pairing participants with experienced teachers (ambassadors). Participants receive professional development and training through partnerships with the City University of New York, Teach for America, the Center for Economic Opportunity, and the New York City Department of Education (Pennemon, 2018). "The program works with the men of color to overcome some of the common barriers and challenges they face in the teacher pipeline" (Pennamon, 2018). Creating a supportive network includes addressing challenges participants face in the classroom. To ensure this, each participant is paired with a trained mentor to provide them with successful strategies for the classroom setting (Pennemon, 2018).

Second, those entering teaching as a secondary profession also felt a need for additional preparation. Highly qualified teachers are skilled in classroom management, yet the majority of

teacher preparation programs are not providing teachers with adequate skills needed to manage challenging behaviors in the classroom (Flower, McKenna, & Haring, 2017). Participants of this study expressed concerns about being thrown into classrooms without the necessary preparation for teaching troubled students. Overall, the findings show a need to increase the time practitioners spend learning from expert practitioners prior to entering the classroom and teaching on their own. Both teachers and administrators agree that additional preparation is necessary for these men prior to them entering the classroom setting. Whenever someone is looking to enter a profession, a semester or two of student teaching won't suffice, according to one administrator. The teachers agree with this sentiment by saying the undergraduate experience fell short in preparing them for the classroom setting. One teacher even surmised that there is not enough differentiation in the college setting because the coursework does not prepare teachers for working with low income students, students with disabilities, which was one difference between the teacher and administrator response because he was the only one that alluded to the differentiation aspect of education. Similarly, Flowers et al., (2017) addressed this issue by stating, teacher certification programs, on average address universal basic classroom management skills, such as establishing routines, positive reinforcement, importance of rules and room arrangement.

Teacher education programs and professional development programs can reduce teacher attrition rates if they are realistic about the preparation of these teachers. "Many students in urban schools endure a life outside of school that would be unfamiliar to most of the teachers they encounter, and many teachers are unable to successfully educate students because they do not know how to successfully approach the demands that urban schools present" (Howard, 2003, p. 149) Although teacher education programs teach strategies that may work for the majority of

students, when a student has severe behavioral concerns, this basic training will not address their needs (Flower et al., 2017). These results are not exclusive to participants of this study. Across the board teachers are leaving the profession. Over the next decade, the U.S. Department of Education is estimating the need of 2.2 million teachers, which means an annual increase of more than 200,000 new teachers (Howard, 2003). Yet, although teacher shortages are widespread, students living in low-income communities will be most affected as these areas typically experience higher rates of teacher turnover, resulting in greater teacher shortages (Howard, 2003).

Another major finding was the common theme of equitable compensation. Finances were a major factor the participants in this study considered when choosing careers, which included the codes of equitable compensation, low-mid socio-economic status and primary provider. From the conversations with both teachers and administrators, they agreed that after graduating from college, some as first generation graduates in their families, choosing a career with a higher salary makes more sense for African American males who are the head of their household. Their responses were consistent with the Brown and Butty's (1999) study, which stated that an increase in salary could contribute to making education more attractive for African American males. This finding is not exclusive to this study as Ingersoll (2001) also agree that teacher turnover rates generally result from issues of job dissatisfaction stemming from low salaries, inadequate support from administration and student discipline problems. Therefore, equitable compensation is not an exclusive concern for just African American males; it can be generalized to the entire teaching population as it is listed as a main reason for leaving the profession (Ingersoll, 2001).

Both administrators and teachers discussed these as major factors in adding to the percentage of African American males entering the education field. They agreed that being a teacher is not lucrative, which is a major barrier for African American males when considering their career options. The compensation is not equivalent to the workload and therefore not worth the stresses of the job. Most participants grew up in families with low-mid socio economic statues. Growing up poor motivated them to change the trajectory of their lives. They believe African American males growing up with similar backgrounds and experiences feel the same about being successful as adults and would prefer to work in a field with higher salaries. Also, since most of these men are primary providers, taking care of their family is at the forefront of their decisions when choosing careers. The sample of participants believed these are strong deterrents because taking care of family is a top priority, especially if they are the primary providers in the household. With student enrollment increasing and teacher turnover rates being high, there are staffing problems in the education system (Ingersoll (2001), particularly with minority teachers. This financial barrier is, however significant across the board as teachers working in schools with higher salaries are less likely to leave the profession (Ingersoll, 2001).

Having meaningful impact on students was also a major part of each conversation with participants. Both cases of teachers and administrators agreed that one of the reasons some participants are still working as educators is a result of the impact they have on students. Manuel and Hughes (2006) reported that 71% of pre-service teachers who were asked about factors that influenced them to teach, one common reason was for personal fulfillment. Several studies indicate reasons for joining the teaching profession and placed them in three categories, 1) altruistic reasons 2) intrinsic reasons and 3) extrinsic reasons (Kyriacou & Coulthard 2000). Altruistic reasons, refers to teaching as a result of a desire to help children succeed and improve

society 2) Intrinsic reasons refer to passion and interest in the subject matter 3) Extrinsic reasons are job related perks, such as salary, long holidays and working conditions. Previous studies indicate motivations for teaching are usually driven by altruistic and intrinsic reasons, such as a desire to work with children (Jarvis & Woodrow, 2005; Manuel & Hughes, 2006). The majority of respondents cited teaching as a career preference due to the influence of a mentor/teacher they had (Manuel & Hughes, 2006). According to Delpit (2006), teaching can be a rewarding experience and can inspire students. Therefore, increasing the number of Black male teachers is important so that Black students can see positive role models as teachers (Delpit, 2006). According to participants, fostering relationships with children through providing extrinsic motivation, being a paternal figure and role model/mentor are parts of the successes they experience as educators. They are dedicated to changing the lives of the students they encounter, which is motivation for them to return as educators each year. Consistent with Brown and Butty's (1999) findings, one significant motivation for African American male teachers was having a desire to impart knowledge. Both teachers and administrators agree that when they were students they received extrinsic motivation from at least one teacher who changed their lives. The meaningful interactions with their role models were part of the reason they chose to become educators. One administrator went further in the discussion to describe how his impact became meaningful to others in his community. He stated that he deliberately sought out African American males and hired them as teaching assistants in his school, with the understanding that they must return to school to get their degrees. He shared the success story of a person he had a meaningful impact on, Mr. C and expressed how he further went on to obtain his teaching certification and is currently an assistant principal at a public school in the New York City area.

Systematic structures were viewed as another barrier for these African American male educators, according to both teachers and principals in this study. This theme had several codes including hiring practices, imbalance staff/less African American male educators and inclusion/additional representation of these men. Changing the structure of the system requires a complete overhaul of increasing the pool of applicants for the job. Diversifying the teaching force to have additional representation of African American males includes establishing programs geared towards improving the Black male teacher representation in schools (Irvine &Fenwick, 2011). Consistent with Wilder (2000), the participants agreed that persistently not having African American teachers means that African American students will not experience role models that resemble them. Part of the problem according to both teachers and principals include the small percentage of African Americans applying for teaching positions, therefore making the selection process difficult. They believed a systematic change is necessary to increase the interest of Black males wanting to become teachers. One organization, the Black Teacher Project (BTP), supports Black teachers by providing them with the skills, community and knowledge they need to thrive in their work while simultaneously supporting non-Black teachers to shift their structures, beliefs and practices to attract and sustain Black educators (Mosley, 2018). Several teachers in this study were one of the few, if not the only Black teacher in their school, which made them feel isolated (Mosley, 2018). Therefore, creating this space for racial affinity groups, having conversations about struggles and providing them with strategies for improving their praxis led to a sense of community, made them stronger teachers and helped them remain in the classroom longer (Mosley, 2018). It also created a sense of self where they felt they could be themselves and not have to hide their emotions or act a certain way (Mosley, 2018).

Systematic racism was brought up when discussing the barriers preventing African American males from entering the teaching profession. One teacher discussed the requirement to pass teacher certification exams to become an educator. He stated, *"there was a big problem with African American men passing these teacher tests at that time, and they were taking the test over and over and over again and they couldn't pass it."* Consistent with Critical Race Theory (CRT) this participant believed this embedded structure is a deterrent to Black males who are not able to pass these standardized tests. Participants in the BTP program also discussed their struggles with passing the teaching certification exams. To combat this, tutoring sessions were offered with time also spent discussing their technical mental and emotional preparation for exams (Mosley, 2018). Toward the end of the sessions, teachers noted the importance of having a study crew and the importance of feeling connected with other Black people in similar situations. After these sessions, 80% of participants took their exams and passed with 100% of them continuing in education the following year (Mosley, 2018).

According to Bryan and Williams (2017), having culturally relevant Black male teachers can benefit the academic and social plight of Black boys. In an earlier study, Lynn (2006) looked at the experiences of several Black teachers working in early childhood education. The results of this study showed having culturally relevant Black male teachers improved students' academic success and developed their critical and racial consciousness to critique the World. Black teachers have an impact on Black students yet the student demographic is not reflective of the staff teaching them (Noguera, 2003). This coincides with the research that discusses the overrepresentation of White female teachers within U.S. schools and an underrepresentation of Black and Hispanic teachers (Delpit, 2006; Toldson, 2010). Each teacher discussed a very small percentage of African American male teachers working in their schools. One principal however,

stated that this is not the major problem. He disagreed with the stance of just losing African American teachers but instead believes that we are losing generations of teachers from all ethnicities. He stated that Black males have always been the minority, which is not something new. He further argued that the field of education is a shrinking pool in general. Ingersol (2001) confirms this by stating that 11% of teachers in the United States leave during the first year of teaching and 39% leave during the first five years.

Working conditions and the influence of the workplace play a role in teacher stability. Schools with high rates of students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, ethnic minorities and learning difficulties have increased rates of teacher attrition (Ingersol, 2001). In an article highlighting the disproportionately high attrition rates of teachers of color, (Kohli, 2018) interviewed 11 veteran women teachers of Color to discuss teaching preparation programs and their preparation for the racial climate they faced in the school system. One particular teacher taught in a school with gang related youth. Within the first five years of teaching, she experienced the loss of her 27th student to gang related violence. After her breakdown, she asked her administration for time to grieve and the callous response caused her to leave the profession. Her interview revealed that she felt ill equipped to navigate the racialized structures of schools. Despite this, she decided to reenter the profession as a result of convening with other teachers of color as they processed the dehumanization she experienced from her previous school (Kohli, 2018). Through this critical professional development (CPD), teachers with like minds convened and developed this support community to strengthen her racial literacy. Through the support of peers, she was able to deal with racialized structures of school inequity and helped her to regain the strength to reenter the teaching profession (Kohli, 2018). Revamping the system is necessary for increasing and improving the profession as a whole. Providing alternate spaces of teacher

development that allows teachers to have support from like minded individuals and strengthen their racial literacy can better prepare teachers of Color for remaining in the teaching profession (Kohli, 2018). This call for diversifying the teaching force is not a suggestion that only Black males should teach minority students, it is however a call to diversify the teaching force so students can have role models with a variety of perspectives (Scott & Rodriguez, 2014). Developing communities with likeminded individuals from similar backgrounds, sharing experiences of marginalization provides support for them as they work to transform the racialized aspect of schooling (Kohli, 2018).

Conclusions and Implications

Providing higher income for educators is a huge part of the conversation for making education more attractive. For example, Brown and Butty's (1999) study indicated that increasing the salary would increase the African American male interest in becoming educators. To increase the diversity of educators and allow African American students to see role models that look like them (Wilder, 2000), there is a need to change the monetary compensation to make the field more competitive with others where people graduate with similar degrees and are starting off with a much higher salary than educators do. A notable increase in teacher salary by making it comparable to other sought after professions such as doctors and lawyers would raise the respectability level of the profession while simultaneously making recruitment efforts easier (Hanushek, 2007). Since teacher mobility rates tend to be higher in areas of disadvantaged students. Solutions include increased the proposed salary in these disadvantaged schools, offering these teachers with subsidized housing, student loan forgiveness, and other incentives are ways to combat the attrition rates in these areas (Hanushek, 2007). Teaching jobs vary depending on the performance of the school. More experienced teachers tend to work in schools

from wealthier communities leaving students from disadvantaged communities with less experienced teachers (Roza &Hill, 2004). Although the reallocation of funds seems to be a solution to the lack of teacher interest in working for schools in impoverished areas, funding for increasing teacher salaries may not be the only solution. Another solution includes the districts monitoring the distribution of teachers within the districts and providing additional financial incentives for teachers working in disadvantaged communities (Roza & Hill, 2004). Tracking the distribution of funds and re-sorting the teacher distribution can improve schools servicing poorer students by providing them with more experienced teachers (Roza & Hill, 2004).

The first research question addressed the perceptions of the African American male public school former and current teachers and administrators in New York City K-12 public schools. One perception, in terms of recruitment and retention is improving the support these men receive while entering the profession. Participants felt college preparation programs did not adequately prepare them for the classroom. Cochran-Smith (2005) supported this when he stated that novice teachers encounter challenges when responding to different teaching situations. One participant stated, "*you can have an amazing lesson, but because your students are emotionally off, that whole lesson goes to nothing…a lot of new teachers leave within the first year because of the stress of this.*" Furthermore, when hired, the expectation is that teachers are able to manage classrooms independently without support from administrators. One teacher stated, "*I had a principal, she gave me a notepad and a pencil, and I came in midyear, and she said, teach. If you can survive this first two weeks, I'll hire you.*" The results of the interviews highlighted this as a major deterrent for men of color becoming educators. Bridging cultural gaps between practitioners and students can benefit teachers and decrease the attrition rates in urban communities.

Collaborative measures from university pre-service programs to diversify field experiences combined with having guided conversations about dispositions, beliefs and concerns are necessary to improve teacher education programs (Lee, Eckrich, Lackey & Showalter, 2010). Additionally, extensive placement in settings in which they will be teaching provides them with experiences in cultural differences of students they will interact with. Salend, Whittaker, Duhaney and Smith (2003) share an example of one such program specifically targeted to increase the diversity of the teaching force. This training program, the Migrant Special Education Program (MSETP) held at the State University of New York at New Paltz (SUNY-New Paltz) is a collaboration between the Special Education Program and the Mid-Hudson Migrant Education Center (Salend et al., 2003). Funded by the Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, students receive a tuition-free 36-credit master's degree in special education with a special focus on working with students from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds (Salend et al., 2003). In addition to diversity in the coursework, pre-service teachers are also exposed to field experiences with multiple opportunities to work with students from diverse backgrounds. Acceptance into the program is contingent on the applicants' abilities to demonstrate their professional, personal, academic and cross-cultural qualities (Salend et al., 2003).

Another perception is based on looking at the underrepresentation of African American male teachers in public schools. Participants strongly believed one of the barriers for these educators is the lack of support and preparation they receive from undergraduate programs as well as administrators. This supports the Korthagen (2010), which identifies this as the gap between theory and practice in teacher education. Most participants, both teachers and principals could count the amount of African American male teachers in their schools on one hand.

Currently, African American males only represent 2.4% of all K-12 teachers (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). One teacher stated, "*I would like to see more representation of African American males especially in the public school system*." Additionally, diversifying teacher preparation programs to show participants how to deal with challenging students is necessary. Changing undergraduate education programs to cater to all students and providing additional support for these men during their first year as teachers would make education more attractive. As Feiman-Nemser (2003) stated, new teachers need at least three or four years to reach proficiency. Leaving them to sink or swim can overwhelm them and cause them to quit teaching. This supports Tait (2008), which stated to increase their sense of efficacy new teachers need support from administrators, colleagues and mentors. According to another teacher, "*I think my colleagues are, as well as myself in the beginning, are just not prepared to work with students from low income, students with disabilities, students with just a ton of problems*." Providing support for them once they enter the classroom setting is important for them to feel successful as opposed to leaving them to fend for themselves.

Results from both teacher and administrator participants also show a necessity for additional financial support. Consistent with Brown and Butty's (1999) study, increasing salary is one of the factors Black males cited as one of the things that could make the profession more attractive for them. Participant responses supported this notion with statements such as, *"if they started paying doctors less money, you wouldn't have people spending fifteen years through a medical degree."* Another participant stated, *"I can't be, I can't do something twenty years to make, you know, a little less than a hundred thousand. I need to make enough."* Making education more lucrative will increase the attractiveness of it.

The second research question about supports and barriers the participants faced growing up in the public school system led to several coded themes. First, a role model or mentor was extrinsically motivating, which changed the trajectory of their lives. All participants held this sentiment, which supported the views of Levine and Nidiffer (1996), who stated that mentoring is important for the success of African American males from low socioeconomic backgrounds and are first generation college students. Participants were able to make a connection to at least one African American male teacher that helped them reach a turning point in school after losing interest and having difficulty with teachers. One participant recalled his public school experience when he stated, "I slowly became less interested in education itself." Another stated, "*I got in trouble everyday, the turning point for me was when I entered high school and encountered a teacher who took me under his wings*."

Without this influence, both teachers and administrators agree they would not know what the outcome of their lives would be. Having that positive role model was extremely memorable for one participant because as a child, he influenced his life just because he saw himself in him. One commonality for each participant was having at least one teacher to help them turn their lives around. Having this positive influence changed the trajectory of their lives and allowed them to be successful. Extrinsic motivation was therefore instrumental and listed as part of the reasons for their success and is noted as one of the main reasons they chose the path of becoming teachers. Hallinan (2008) confirms this by stating that interactions between teachers and students affect how students perceive school. This twofold interaction includes: 1) the extent to which teachers provide emotional support for students and 2) the expectations teachers have for the academic performance of that child (Hallinan, 2008). In 2001, a study conducted in Chicago public school systems surveyed students about teacher support and whether their teachers really

cared about them. Results indicated that all teacher-support variables show a strong, statistical significance and had positive effects, showing students are more likely to be attracted to school when they have teachers who are fair, praise them and care about them (Hallinan, 2008). When students meet the expectations of teachers, this approval builds self-confidence and increases their efforts to persistently achieve (Hallinan, 2008). As a result, these positive interactions with teachers improve the academic success of students as they develop an attachment to their school. Consequently, students with adverse relationships with teachers lose self-confidence and motivation to thrive in school, declining the quality of their academic work (Hallinan, 2008).

Understanding student struggles due to similar upbringings was also highlighted as a support teachers and administrators faced while growing up. Although the participants became successful, they grew up in families from low-mid socio economic statues. Milner (2006) argued that, "Black teachers can have a meaningful impact on Black students' academic and social successes because they often deeply understand Black students' situations and their needs (p. 93)." Toure, a teacher agreed with this when he stated, "*I understand the experiences the kids are having in the neighborhood, you know, also having similar upbringing*." Kareem and Mark's statements about growing up poor and also supported Milner (2006) because they were able to foster meaningful connections as a result of this. According to these participants, students responded to them because they knew teachers could empathize with their experiences.

Barriers listed for African American males changing systematic structures to deliberately hiring Black male teachers. John agreed with this statement when he said, "*I didn't find out until late in life that it was a barrier, just not having the opportunity to have an African American male teacher or female teacher for that matter. I was in eighth grade when I counted my first African American teacher, period. And it wasn't until my college years where I was introduced*

to my second." Big Reg stated, "*In addition to that, I mean systemically, where are the avenues for Black males to get to become a teacher? Like where is the support, where is the push?"* As mentioned earlier, the underrepresentation is alarming (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003) and diversifying teaching programs is necessary. As participants reflected over their childhood experiences, all participants mentioned only having one or two African American male teachers while they were students. Bristol (2015), Delpit (2006) and Toldson (2010), support their experiences when they discussed that the underrepresentation of African American male teachers reduces the chances that African American students will encounter positive role models that look like them in the classroom. Mark, a teacher stated, *"I really don't remember having African American male teachers... I think there's a stereotype that teachers were always women*." Recruitment efforts should include providing incentives for educators teaching in disadvantaged areas with high attrition rates (Hanushek, 2007). Disproportionality in teaching can change with intentional efforts to diversify the teaching population. This White female dominant profession does not match the demographics of the students being taught, as there is a severe underrepresentation of Black and Hispanic teachers in the United States (Delpit, 2006; Toldson, 2010). Increasing efforts to diversify the teaching population include providing support for teachers by giving them access to mentors, providing a supportive environment that creates a safe space to discuss challenges and additional preparation for the challenging behaviors they face in the school system (Kohli, 2018).

Another barrier discussed is the African American male student experience. Disproportionate placement in special education (Harry & Anderson, 1994), high expulsion rates, an increase in the gap of academic achievement and constant punishment are all factors contributing to their negative experiences in school. Holzman (2012) stated, throughout the

United States, Black males are more likely to experience challenges in schools due to high expulsion rates, special education placements and punishment. One participant, Baron, a member of the focus group agreed with this when he stated, "*I think the Black male has been traumatized from being in the public school system that if you operate from a place of trauma, you don't wanna go back to that place 'cause if you think about high suspension rates and targeting and over-policing Black males in school*." African American male students are suspended 2.6 times more frequently than white students and receive more severe punishments. Furthermore, African American males, Latinos, students with disabilities and low achievers have higher probabilities of exclusion than any other group (Noguera, 2003). These disciplinary actions and disproportionate rates in juvenile detention centers are linked to students ending up in adult correctional systems (Walker, 2012).

Although the school-to-prison pipeline is complex with no easy solutions, emphasis should be placed on, creating positive school environments for students with disciplinary problems by finding alternate ways to handle discipline using less punitive measures. Methods to reduce recidivism rates include, decreasing the number of suspensions, improving the students' academic achievement (Nance, 2016) and reducing the amount of special education referrals (Holzman, 2012). Solving problems of disparities include amending federal and state education funding laws to give students further access to mentoring programs, mental health services, additional counselors, character building programs and having positive encounters with teachers and other members of the school community (Nance, 2016).

Decreasing recidivism rates also include providing students with incentives to encourage positive behavior. School Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS), for example gives a positive, proactive approach to struggling students (Simmons-Reed & Cartledge, 2004). Instead

of demerits, this plan can reduce disciplinary referrals, especially among the group with the highest rates of discipline referrals. Also, deliberately implementing programs to increase academic success for students of Color can decrease the student high school dropout rates, disciplinary referrals, suspension rates and consequently increase the graduation rates (Simmons-Reed & Cartledge, 2004). By creating and implementing academic interventions to bridge the gap in academic success for these students, it can reduce the growing disproportionate rates of failure for students of color (Simmons-Reed & Cartledge, 2004).

Additionally, participants discussed curriculum restrictions, low expectations, implicit bias and lack of resources as other barriers for Black students. Ethnic and racial inequalities are present in the school curricula, which is often centered with Eurocentric ideas, overlooking the historical experiences of non-European groups while validating the experiences of White people (Alvaré, 2018). Implementing diversity in the curriculum requires preservice teachers to experience a teacher education curriculum preparing them for it (Banks, 2001). Due to the growing racial, cultural, ethnic and religious diversity worldwide, citizenship education must be changed to prepare students for the 21st century (Banks, 2001). To accomplish this, preservice teachers need to critically think about culture, race and ethnicity. Understanding privilege begins with unpacking the effects of institutionalized racism and realizing colorblindness often justifies inaction and perpetuating the status quo (Banks, 2001). Unpacking inequities by incorporating lectures, activities and discussions reframing the concepts of race, ethnicity and culture are integral parts of changing teacher education programs (Banks, 2001). Participants Toure, Kareem, T'challa and John all agreed that the curriculum lacked diversity and did not allow them to have representation in the history they learned about. John stated, "*I don't know if the system really was set up to support me, to be honest. The curriculum didn't do anything to build my*

knowledge for my, my heritage, right? So in fact, it taught me everything that the White male has done and has brought to this society, this world." Although the curricula is presented as unbiased, it is often filled with the perspectives and experiences of White people (Alvaré, 2018). Critical Race Theory addresses this systematic racism, which supports the interest of powerful Whites (Taylor et al., 2009), by dismissing the experiences of non-European groups as a way mask White privilege (Sleeter, 2016). Creating and implementing a multicultural curriculum lays the foundation for developing communication skills, however additional work is required to immerse student teachers in learning about different cultures by having them complete field work in urban settings, actively seeking positions to work with marginalized students, such as those from families with low-socio economic statuses, foster children, and other marginalized groups (Ngai, 2004). Their experiences should also require them to tutor minority students to gain sensitivity training and understanding of how culture shapes their learning style (Ngai, 2004).

The operational definition of implicit bias for this study is any mental association a person or groups of people have towards certain groups with specific traits that are often followed by subconscious prejudice. This was discussed by T'challa when he stated, *"but we as educators and people that run the system need to start addressing implicit bias and who we think could do what. So there's a negative stereotype of males in education that we don't champion their cognitive ability."* His statement is supported by (Noguera, 2003) when he discusses the inaccurate stereotypes, which permeate our school system. He continues by discussing the countless accounts of reinforced stereotypes that invade perceptions of specific groups. Black males are also more likely to experience challenges in schools because of expulsion, punishment and special education labels (Holzman, 2012).

Consequently, lack of resources was listed as a barrier African American students face. Kareem discussed choosing his career and wishing he had additional exposure growing up. He stated, "*I would have loved to have been exposed to more, like I don't, I didn't know about any engineering fields growing up and teaching science now, I would have definitely wanted to be an engineer."* He discusses lack of exposure to a variety of professions growing up and he continued by stating, "*exposure to more content, more people, like I went to—the college that I went to was the only college that I visited. I didn't know about any other college, so like a barrier was just exposure."*

The third research question addressed any potential changes that can be made to the teaching profession to support African American male students. Although ethnic and racial minorities account for more than half of the student population in the United States public school system, Black male teachers make up a mere 2% of the teaching population (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011). A major reason for the shortage of Black male teachers originates in grades K-12 where a disproportionate number of African American males are not graduating from high school (Pablo, Anderson & Kharem, 2011). Since 2004, the Schott Foundation for public school has documented that of all gender, ethnic, and racial groups, Black males are the least likely to secure regular diplomas (Holzman, 2012). Conversations with participants also resulted in the topic of systematic changes in education. One specific concern was the lack of African American male representation in the education field. According to participants, finding ways to combat this disparity is essential for providing African American students with role models that resemble them. Additionally, reducing suspension rates, disciplinary referrals, expulsions and closing the academic achievement gap for African American male students requires an increase in culturally responsive teaching and cultural awareness to support them (Simmons-Reed &

Cartledge, 2014). Supporting Black male students starts with preservice education programs equipping teachers with adequate tools, such as increased hours of student teaching in urban areas with students from low socioeconomic statuses, mandating classes that encourage multiculturalism and diversity are necessary for closing the achievement gap and decreasing the school-to-prison pipeline (Simmons-Reed & Cartledge, 2014). Other participants discussed bridging the gap between students who lack father figures at home. For example, Mark believed being a role model is extremely important because, "*so many young, especially our population, so many young guys who don't have fathers at home or women raising their kids."*

According to Brown (2012), the social conditions of Black boys surfaced as a national crisis in the early 1990s, which led to initiatives geared towards increasing the African American male teacher presence in schools. This notion to increase Black male teachers as role models presumed they could transfer positive habits and behaviors to Black male students to replace the absent fathers or negative role models in their lives (Brown, 2012). Efforts to enhance the academic performances of Black males in colleges are key for improving retention and graduation rates. Programs such as Black Male Initiative (BMI) that are in place across specific universities support Black male success (Brooms, 2018). Centered around the Black male college experience, these programs focus on retaining African American students by increasing their engagement in campus activities, creating peer-to-peer bonding, providing access to a range of resources, and promoting opportunities to enhance college retention and ultimately graduation (Brooms, 2018). Programs such as the African American Male Initiative Program, Brother2Brother, Student African American Brotherhood, and Black Male Think Tank exist on college campuses across the United States (Brooms, 2018). These programs are more prevalent at Historically White Institutions (HWIs) to help reduce the isolation and racial discrimination

these Black men may experience due to the small percentages of students of color (Brooms, 2018).

The fourth and final research question addressed commonalities and differences in the perceptions about supports and barriers for the teachers and administrators. Commonalities for supports included both teachers and administrators discussing the meaningful impact a particular teacher had on them. Consistent with Brown and Butty's (1999) findings, one significant motivation for African American male teachers was teaching to impart knowledge on others. One teacher Mark said, "*I had a band teacher that, when I was in middle school, and he was a guy who almost took me under his wing... and it was his guidance that got me into LaGuardia."* Toure, a second teacher stated, *"I realize the subconscious influence that they had on me even getting into education or how they had like just some sort of efficacy towards like being—not efficacy but being passionate towards, caring about me. Black educators, even though they were very strict, they were indicators of them just showing us like sense of caring."* DJ, the principal responded similarly when when shared his experience about teacher whose influence had a indelible impact on him due to his passion for teaching. He said, *"I learned his passion and how much he loved what he did. So it became a desire of mine to be just as impactful and influential as he was."*

The common thread for both principals and teachers was having someone that influenced their lives and how it made a huge difference in their career choice for the future. Irvine and Fenwick (2011) also addressed this when they discussed diversifying the teaching force which means having additional representation of Black male teachers. DJ, the principal then shared how he used his influence as a principal to influence Black males from the community to go back to school and pursue education. His perception about support was that, yes there are very

few Black male educators but he didn't just look at the problem, he created a solution for it. He went to a community and recruited young Black men to work as teachers aids. He hired them, had multiple conversations and discussed how ways to get their lives back on track. He provided opportunities for them to become successful. He gave a story about one particular guy, Mr. C. stating, *"I gave him the requirements. Mr. C. went, got a teaching certification, got his bachelor's, got his teaching certification, became a literacy math coach, he's now an assistant principal in Mount Vernon. And on top of that, I'm also a college professor, and I was teaching a school district leadership course, and who ends up being in my class but Mr. C."* He continued his reflection when he said, *"so he's able, I'm able to look at him and say, here's an example of what I molded from the ground up, and I see the impact it has made."* His strategy also coincides with Noguera (2003), which stated that necessary changes in hiring practices are crucial for recruiting and sustaining the African American male representation in the classroom setting.

Teachers and administrators also identified common barriers for education. One recurring theme for both was equitable compensation. All participants agreed that teachers do not earn enough money. Consistent with Brown and Butty (1999), who stated that making education more lucrative would make it more attractive for African American males Mark, a teacher said, "*then there is the economic aspect, the pay, you know, is just—especially starting out, is really tough, you know, trying to raise a family."* Toure, a teacher expressed the same belief when he stated, *"think about any other profession, if they started paying doctors less money, you wouldn't have people spending fifteen years through a medical degree and all these residencies to ____ all these great doctors floating to the top, right? It's because of the money why you have top talent"* Taj, another teacher agreed with others in this study when he said, *"If you talk about the disparity with high academics, when you graduate you want to make money, right? Because you*

come from—like you know, I made a joke saying like the typical Black male experience, but the reality of it is is that the majority of Black males are like first generation, second generation graduates." DJ, a principal also agreed with the teachers statements about increasing the pay for educators. He stated "*the world looks different to me than to a person making less than a hundred thousand dollars. And you're making forty thousand, after you pay rent and you buy a couple of pair of sneakers or you take care of your family, you don't have anything left. So I think that's where men make their decisions."*

Additionally, institutional glass ceilings (Taylor et al., 2009), such as standardized testing was listed as a barrier for Black males who are not able to pass them. This is not only a factor preventing African American males from entering the teaching profession but is also a barrier for African American students. This is consistent with Critical Race Theory, which discusses the embedded educational structures that create barriers for African American men who are not able to pass standardized tests therefore contributing to disproportionately low enrollment of teachers and principals of color (Taylor et al., 2009). Providing access to supplementary resources for preservice teachers of color can increase passing rates of the exams (Petchauer, 2012). Self-efficacy, a concept referring to one's belief about their capabilities in specific areas, deems that success within specific domains can influence decisions people make and how they experience different situations (Petchauer, 2012). A person with previous mastery experiences in specific domains increases their belief about completing the task when exposed to similar situations (Petchauer, 2012). The converse also proves true about non-mastery or failure of specific experiences. This notion of the importance of experiences with mastery and non-mastery addresses prior experiences African American males may face with standardized exams and consequently licensure exams (Petchauer, 2012). Prior negative experiences around standardized

tests, benchmark exams, or any high stakes testing can have negative effects on their experiences with the teacher licensure exam (Petchauer, 2012). As a result, combating these experiences through additional support and preparation can increase self-efficacy or the belief about their capabilities in the area of testing, while consequently improving their passing rates (Petchauer, 2012). John, a teacher listed a barrier as *"just not having the opportunity to have an African American male teacher or female teacher for that matter. I was in eighth grade when I counted my first African American teacher, period."* Peter, a principal agreed with this statement when he shared his experience growing up. He discussed his most memorable teacher from the 5th grade. He stated, *"Ms. S was memorable for me is because she was my first black teacher. And so from Kindergarten through 4th grade, all my teachers were white and Ms. S. was my first black teacher. I never had another black teacher again until I got to college."*

Consequently, participants discussed feeling underprepared during the first year of teaching due to inadequate preparation from undergraduate teaching courses and lack of support from administrators. Korthagen (2010) agreed with this and identified it as the gap between theory and practice in teacher education. When asked about his first year as an educator, John, a teacher recalled having an extremely challenging first year. He shared, *"when I entered, I wasn't prepared for the group of students that I was going to receive. The students obviously knew that they got rid of three teachers prior to myself, so it was challenging, very challenging."* He further expressed his feelings about college preparation for teachers. He stated, *"I was prepared with the philosophy aspect of it, but I was not prepared for the population of students that I was going to teach."*

Peter, a principal shared a common experience as John listing lack of preparation as a barrier for African American males entering the teaching profession. According to Peter, once he

was hired for the position, he had no prior teaching experience because he switched careers. This is consistent with Feiman-Nemser (2003) who stated, new teachers need at least three or four years to reach proficiency. When they are sink or swim it can overwhelm them and cause them to quit teaching. His administrator saw that he was a math teacher, hired him and said, *"hey, you say you're gonna teach these kids? Here's your role book, here's your roster, those are the kids. If you need some help, call me!"* He further stated, *"well, it was almost traumatic because after my first year, I stopped teaching. I only taught for one year, then my second son was born and I volunteered to stay home and watch him other than go back to the classroom. So when he was old enough to go to Pre-K, then I went back with a different mentality."* Tait (2008) also agreed by stating, to increase their sense of efficacy new teachers need support from administrators, colleagues and mentors.

Changing the trajectory of education includes reducing these barriers by first acknowledging they exist, then working on ways to combat them. Implicit bias, operationally defined as any mental association a person or groups of people have towards certain groups with specific traits that are often followed by subconscious prejudice (Payne, Vuletich, & Lundberg, 2017). Decreasing implicit bias begins at the both the student level by creating opportunities for assimilation among various student groups and at the institutional level by increasing cultural awareness within educators and making cultural shifts within the curriculum (Boscardin, 2015). Bringing these prejudices to light through implicit bias training (Payne et al., 2017) can help educators to understand the negative associations affiliated with African American males and can provide concrete strategies for improving relations with these students and their teachers. Replacing negative stereotypes with positive mental associations significantly reduces implicit bias (Boscardin, 2015). Secondly, additional academic support and positive exposure to

educational resources can change the ways African American males view school. Initiatives, such as *My Brother's Keeper*, a program led by former President Barack Obama in partnership with the Department of Education and Johns Hopkins University to pair 6th and 9th graders with trained mentors for the purpose of increasing attendance and achievement in high needs communities, can help dismantle barriers disadvantaged youth, especially young men of color face within the school system such as the widening academic achievement gap (Banks, 2011; Bickel, 1981), the school-to-prison pipeline system (Banks, 2011) and the overpopulation in special education programs (Taylor et al., 2009). This program has been established across all 50 states, the District of Columbia and at least 19 Tribal Nations to provide supports for ethnic-minority students (Sanacore, 2017). Actions include adding additional mentors, recruiting male teachers of color, providing training for parents, giving them access to library cards, free books, training tutors and proving a range of counseling services (Sanacore, 2017). Consistent support from dedicated mentors is critical for the success of this program. Students can make lifelong changes with positive role models, committed to helping them navigate their emotional and academic states by shifting from negative school experiences to creating positive ones (Sanacore, 2017).

Discussion of Results

Overall, the three theories that make sense of the African American male teachers and administrators experience in education were strongly supported by the results of this study. Teachers and principals expressed concerns for African American males as educators and reasons for these concerns. Moreover, the participants discussed their perceptions and ways to improve the educational system for both African American males as well as student. Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2004), Critial Race Theory (Taylor et al., 2009) and Deficit

Thinking Theory (Burciaga; 2015; Trent, Artiles & Englert, 1998) can be used to explain the perceptions of these African American male teachers and principals. This study sought to listen to participants' perspectives and to ultimately discuss possible ways to change the African American male representation in education. Therefore Self-determination theory can be used to explain how the meaningful relationships of participants and someone who influenced their lives prompted them to become educators to help students. Critical Race Theory can be used to explain barriers African American male students face in school with standardized testing and the impact it has on the African American males graduating from college and consequently entering teacher education programs. Deficit Thinking Theory can also be used to explain why inadequacies such as inequalities, poverty, low-income and lack of socialization at home thought of as the victims' choice as opposed to blaming the real issues, such as structural and systematic inequalities that permeate these environments (Burciago, 2015; Trent, Artiles, & Englert, 1998).

The present study provides empirical support for Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2004), Critical Race Theory (Taylor et al., 2009) and Deficit Thinking Theory (Burciaga, 2015). More specifically, this study supports its applicability in explaining the perceptions of African American male teachers and educators. The qualitative interviews allowed for the collection of face-to-face data about participants' experiences (Lapan et al., 2012). Using a cross case analysis allowed for comparing teacher and administrator responses to the research questions.

Furthermore, the results of the study reveal improving the rate of African American male teacher representation begins with improving the African American male student education experience. The findings from this study also add to the existing body of research about African American males in education.

Limitations

The primary limitation of this study was the small convenience sample of 11 African American males involved in this study from 3 of the 5 boroughs in the New York City Department of Education. The results were specific to the educational environment in New York City public schools. As a result, the findings could not be generalized to an entire population.

Researcher bias could also be a limitation to this study since the researcher is a college-educated African American woman teaching in a public school in New York City, and frequently sees a shortage of African American male teachers represented at her school and across her district. Efforts including member check and expert audit were used to reduce inherent bias.

Another limitation is that the researcher only focused on Black men to gain their perspectives. It might have been helpful to get the perspective of educators from different racial backgrounds to gain their input about African American male colleagues. However, speaking only with Black men gave the researcher an opportunity to understand their personal experiences and to meet the major aim of the study.

Recommendation for Future Research

Many factors contribute to the dearth of African American male teachers in public schools. Having conversations with the participants of this study was a start to adding to the research about the perspectives of African American male educators. Additional research is necessary for understanding the perception of African American male educators and students across the nation. Using both qualitative and quantitative data could enhance the study of this phenomenon in the future.

Future research as an outcome of the study would involve multiple participants across the United States, including getting the perspectives of students, African American males, as well as

representatives from the opposite side of the spectrum, White females since the research shows that although the black male teacher-student ratio is 1:534, there is a White female teacher for every 5 students (Toldson, 2010). White female teachers make up 63% of the teaching force (Toldson, 2010).

Researcher Praxis

Conducting research using the cross case analysis provided the researcher with two separate cases of teachers and administrators sharing their experiences as Black male educators. Looking at education from both the teacher and administrators point of view allowed the researcher to understand each perspective when considering ways to improve the educational experiences of Black male students. Therefore, creating a case study from both the teachers and administrators perspectives was important. The process included coding for themes, using the cross case analysis process to compare themes and then analyzing how both points of view coincided. Patterns of recurring themes were then connected throughout both cases. One major consistency for both teachers and administrators included the consistent desire to improve the African American male experience in the education system from a younger age. When reviewing supports and barriers that influenced their own education, both teachers and administrators shared similar experiences of having a maximum of one African American male teacher within their K-12 educational experience, which they viewed as a barrier.

The researcher believes that colleges with preservice teacher programs should incorporate mandatory hours of student teaching where students work in urban school districts, with large populations of students from backgrounds with low socioeconomic statuses. New teachers are entering schools unprepared to face the challenges they experience managing student behavior from students dealing with challenges they are unfamiliar with.

By acknowledging and addressing implicit biases within oneself and within the curriculum, educators provide access to students of color. Changing their educational experiences, beginning with the curriculum and incorporating additional multicultural activities creates a sense of value among these students. Therefore, principals must find a way to combat the lack of exposure these teachers have with Implicit Bias training for all staff members within the schools. Changing the narrative of African American males academic achievement gap, reducing the suspension rates and disciplinary actions taken against these students, interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline and consequently increasing graduation rates are critical for creating change for African American male students.

This study took place in a familiar setting to me. I am a product of the New York City Department of Education and I am currently a 6th and 7th grade teacher. This research study afforded the researcher the opportunity to determine the perception some African American males about working in the New York City Department of Education. Each participants' input has been valuable, and provides their perspective of the treatment of African American male students as well as how they feel they are perceived as educators. The perception of African American male teachers and administrators is paramount to understanding reasons for the limited representation in the teaching profession. Their responses made the researcher even more convinced that this topic is an issue that needs to be further addressed in order to change the narrative. The men in the study show there are educated Black men out there who are remaining in the teaching profession for years and their experiences are an important part of the narrative. The researcher has become much more aware of their experiences and is more interested in becoming part of the solution.

As a result, the researcher is finding out more about current initiatives in the New York City area to support the retention of these Black men once they become educators. One such program, NYC Men Teach is an initiative that was created to inspire diversity in the teaching force by encouraging men of color to become teachers in New York City. In collaboration with the New York City Department of Education, the Young Men's Initiative and the City University of New York, this program woks on impacting diversity in schools and in the classrooms. The aim is to promote educator effectiveness for men of color through personal growth, professional development and providing them with a village to support them to help them enter and remain in the teaching profession.

The perspectives of African American male educators and their perceptions about the shortage of educators in New York is an area of interest for the researcher. As a result, this study was launched and created an opportunity to open the dialogue for this topic. The researcher only hopes this study continues and the efforts to change the face of teaching are an ongoing effort instigated by these narratives of Black male students and teachers. Reflecting on the results of the research and the honest views of these male teachers and principals, the researcher has become more aware of possible reasons there are few Black male teachers and administrators in the New York City Department of Education. The results from this study also coincide with other studies about the dearth of Black men in education. Their voices echo the sentiments of the changing demographics of students in the United States.

This study provided arguments supporting increasing Black males in the education system. The researcher however is not suggesting that a qualified White person should not teach at a school with predominantly Black kids. Woodson (2013, p.24) states it best when he says:

Yet we should not take the position that a qualified White person

should not teach in a Negro school. For certain work which temporarily some Whites may be able to do better than the Negro is to be forced to live in the ghetto he can more easily develop out of it under his own leadership than under that which is super-imposed. The Negro will never be able to show all of his originality as long as his efforts are directed from without by those who socially proscribe him. Such "friends" will unconsciously keep him in the ghetto. Herein, however, the emphasis is not on the necessity for separate systems but upon the need for common sense schools and teachers who understand and continue in sympathy with those whom they instruct. Those who take position to the contrary have the idea that education is merely a process of imparting information.

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Appendix A: Teacher Interview Questions

Day 1: Share as much as possible about their lives growing up until the time they became teachers.

1. How would you identify with yourself racially? (If you would like I can suggest some categories) (demographics)
2. How would you describe your socio-economic status growing up? (demographics)
3. Describe your experiences attending public school. What were some of your most memorable experiences? Least memorable?
4. Who was your most memorable teacher? Why?
5. Do you remember other teachers that influenced you? Please describe them (male, race, etc.)

6. About how many African American male teachers did you have in school (K-12)? (short response expected)
7. How would you rate yourself as a student (K-12)? (short response expected)
8. Were you ever suspended? Why?
9. If you could change anything about your education (K-12), what would you change? Why?
10. How would you rate yourself as a student in college? (short response expected)
11. What prompted you to enter the teaching profession?
12. If you had an opportunity to redo college, would you still choose teaching? Why or why not?
13. Where did you attend school? Do you think that you were adequately prepared for this teaching position?(2 questions)
14. What additional preparation do you think is necessary for teachers, particularly black males before entering the teaching profession?
15. How many schools did you apply to before being hired at this one? (short response expected)
16. How did you learn about this current position at your school? (short response expected)
17. Is there anything else you want to share?

Day 2: Reconstruct experiences with family, in their neighborhood growing up, their schools, with friends and at work. This focuses on present day experiences of participants regarding the topic African American educators in education.

DAY 2

1. Why did you decide to become a teacher? How many years have you been teaching? (2 questions)
2. Why do you think your principal hired you?
3. What influenced your decision to work at this school? What influenced your decision to stay here? (2 questions)
4. What grades and what subjects do you teach? Is this your ideal grade and subject? (2 questions)
5. How do you feel about your job here? (Relationships with colleagues, administration, students, parents)
6. What do you like most about this school? What are your most memorable experiences here? Why? (Least memorable experiences)? Why? (2 + questions)
7. If you could change anything about this school, what would you change? Why?
8. Describe your interactions with your colleagues? How do think they perceive you?
9. How comfortable are you around your colleagues? Do you think you can completely be yourself without being judged? (2 questions)
10. Think about the colleagues you interact with most. How would you describe them?
11. Describe your interactions with administration. How do you think they perceive you?
12. What are their hiring practices like? Does it match the demographics of your school? Are they more/less prone to hire African American males? What makes you think this? (4 questions)
13. If you were an administrator, would you keep or change the hiring practices? Why or why not?

14. What keeps you coming back? If another opportunity presented itself, would you take it? Why or why not? (2 questions)

Day three allows participants to reflect of the meaning of their experiences

1. Describe the school in which you work. What is the ratio of male-female teachers in your school? What is the racial makeup of teachers? Principal? Students?
2. How do you feel about the gender and racial makeup of teachers to students/administrators to teachers?
3. Are there other black male educators in your school? What's the percentage?
4. Does this school actively recruit black male teachers?
5. Is this an ideal place for black males to work?
6. How do you think schools' make decisions to hire? Who makes that decision?
7. Describe your interactions with students. How do you think they perceive you?
8. How would you rate your interactions with students? Is there a particular group you feel you have the most impact on? Why do you feel this way?
9. What role do you think you play in their lives?
10. Describe your colleague's interactions with students, particularly black male students. Are the interactions the same or different based on gender and race? Explain
11. What is the percentage of suspension/special education rates of black male students in your school?
12. Do you think administrators target you for particular jobs/committees because of your gender or race?
13. Why do you think there are so few black male teachers working in public school?

14. How, if at all has being a black male teacher influenced your relationship with your colleagues, students, parents, and the principal?
15. How long do you think you will remain in the teaching profession?
16. What is your ideal job? If it is elsewhere, why would you prefer doing that? What's preventing you from leaving?

Research Questions:

1) What are your perceptions about supports and restrictions of African American male public school teachers and administrators in New York City K-12 public schools?

The sub-questions are:

2) What were some of the educational supports and barriers you faced growing up in the public school system?

3) What are potential changes that can be made to the teaching profession to support African American male teachers and students?

Appendix B: Principal Interview Questions

Day 1: Share as much as possible about their lives growing up until the time they became teachers.

18. How would you identify with yourself racially? (If you would like I can suggest some categories) (demographics)
19. How would you describe your socio-economic status growing up? (demographics)
20. Describe your experiences attending public school. What were some of your most memorable experiences? Least memorable?
21. Who was your most memorable teacher? Why?
22. Do you remember other teachers that influenced you? Please describe them (male, race, etc.)
23. About how many African American male teachers did you have in school (K-12)? (short response expected)
24. How would you rate yourself as a student (K-12)? (short response expected)
25. Were you ever suspended? Why?
26. If you could change anything about your education (K-12), what would you change? Why?
27. How would you rate yourself as a student in college? (short response expected)
28. What prompted you to enter the teaching profession?
29. If you had an opportunity to redo college, would you still choose teaching? Why or why not?
30. Where did you attend school? Do you think that you were adequately prepared for this teaching position? (2 questions)

31. What additional preparation do you think is necessary for teachers, particularly black males before entering the teaching profession?
32. How many schools did you apply to before being hired at this one? (short response expected)
33. How did you learn about this current position at your school? (short response expected)
34. Is there anything else you want to share?

Day 2: Reconstruct experiences with family, in their neighborhood growing up, their schools, with friends and at work. This focuses on present day experiences of participants regarding the topic African American educators in education.

DAY 2

15. Why did you decide to become a teacher/principal? How many years have you been teaching? How many years have you been a principal? (2 questions)
16. Why do you think you were hired as a principal?
17. What criteria do you use when hiring teachers?
18. What influenced your decision to become a principal school? What influenced your decision to stay here? (2 questions)
19. What age group do you work with?
20. How do you feel about your job here? (Relationships with colleagues, students, parents)
21. What do you like most about this school? What are your most memorable experiences here? Why? (Least memorable experiences)? Why? (2 + questions)
22. If you could change anything about this school, what would you change? Why?
23. Describe your interactions with your employees? How do think they perceive you?

24. How comfortable are you around your employees? Do you think you can completely be yourself without being judged? (2 questions)
25. Think about the employees/colleagues you interact with most. How would you describe them?
26. What are your hiring practices like? Does it match the demographics of your school? Are they more/less prone to hire African American males? What makes you think this? (4 questions)
27. As an administrator, is there anything you would change about hiring practices? Why or why not?
28. What keeps you coming back? If another opportunity presented itself, would you take it? Why or why not? (2 questions)

Day three allows participants to reflect of the meaning of their experiences

17. How long have you been an administrator?
18. Do you intend to stay at this school next year? If you had an opportunity to teach at another school would you take it? Why or why not?
19. If there is anything you could change about the school, what would you change? Why?
20. Describe the school in which you work. What is the ratio of male-female teachers in your school? What is the racial makeup of teachers? Principal? Students?
21. How do you feel about the gender and racial makeup of teachers to students/administrators to teachers?
22. Are there other black male principals in your district? What's the percentage?
23. Does your school actively recruit black male teachers?
24. Is this an ideal place for black males to work?

25. Who makes that decision about who you hire?
26. Describe your interactions with students. How do you think they perceive you?
27. How would you rate your interactions with students? Is there a particular group you feel you have the most impact on? Why do you feel this way?
28. What role do you think you play in their lives?
29. Describe your employees' interactions with students, particularly black male students. Are the interactions the same or different based on gender and race? Explain
30. What is the percentage of suspension/special education rates of black male students in your school?
31. Why do you think there are so few black male teachers working in public school?
32. How, if at all has being a black male administrator influenced your relationship with your colleagues, students, parents, and the principal?
33. How long do you think you will remain as an administrator?
34. What is your ideal job? If it is elsewhere, why would you prefer doing that? What's preventing you from leaving?

Research Questions:

1) What are your perceptions about supports and restrictions of African American male public school teachers and administrators in New York City K-12 public schools?

2) What were some of the education supports and barriers you faced growing up in the public school system?

3) What are potential changes that can be made to the teaching profession to support African American male teachers and students?

Appendix C: Participant Consent Form

Dear Participant,

Thank you again for agreeing to participate in this research. The following form provides all the necessary information related to the research.

- **Research Title:** Contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education: A Case Study
-
- **Principal Investigator:** Nadine Sinclair

- **Subject rights:** This interview involves research, participation is voluntary, *and* that participants may withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.

- **Purpose of the study:** The purpose of this case study is to your journey as a teacher of the NYC Department of Education and to understand your school experiences as a way to determine the positive and negative impacts your education had on your life. This study will specifically focus on what led you to pursue and either remain or leave the New York City public K-12 school system. The study will give you an opportunity to discuss the plight of the African American male students in public schools. You will have an opportunity to address significant issues in creating diversity for Black young men by discussing their experiences in school, their decision to enter and remain in the teaching profession and the implications of adding more African American males as positive role models in the education system.
- **Study tasks or procedures:** If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in three 60 minute, audio-taped interviews, using a digital recorder. The first phase is to use a case study approach from a phenomenological stance to give the researcher an opportunity to identify prevalent issues relevant your experience as an African American male in the public school system (Creswell, 2009). This interview will be recorded, transcribed and coded for themes. After the process, the audio recording will be available to be heard by the researcher, Ms. Sinclair, personnel from the IRB and the dissertation chair, Dr. Thomas Christ. The recording will be transcribed by Ms. Nadine Sinclair to ensure your privacy.

- **Duration of subject's participation:** If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in three 60 minute, audio-taped interviews, using a digital recorder.

- **Confidentiality:** Numbers as opposed to names will identify the interviewees. No one will be able to trace the information discussed back to him or her. After the process, the audio recording will be available to be heard by the researcher, Ms. Sinclair, personnel from the IRB and the dissertation chair, Dr. Thomas Christ. The recording will be transcribed by Ms. Nadine Sinclair to ensure your privacy. The data will be stored in a secure closet on and the transcription will be on a computer, which is solely used by the researcher.

- **Contacts and Questions:**
    - If you have any questions, you may contact the principal researcher: Nadine Sinclair can be reached via phone (718) 473-6968 or email nsinclair@psms108.org or Dr. Thomas Christ, the research chair, who can be reached via phone (203) 249-4592 or email tchrist@bridgeport.edu.
    - *For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact the University of Bridgeport's IRB Coordinator at chemp@bridgeport.edu or 203-576-4973.*

- **Incentives:** There are no incentives for participation in this study.

- **Sponsor:** N/A

I consent to participate in the study about the *Contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education: A Case Study*

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I consent to being audio-recorded for the study about the *Contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education: A Case Study*

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Thank you once again for agreeing to participate in my study.

Appendix D: Focus Group Interview Questions

Share as much as possible about their lives growing up until the time they became teachers/principals

Before we begin, each person will be identified as a number. Please state your number prior to answer each question. You can choose to answer a question or skip it. We will begin by asking everyone to state their name and number.

1) How would you identify with yourself racially?
2) How would you describe your socio-economic status growing up? (demographics)
3) Describe your experiences attending public school. What were some of your most memorable experiences? Least memorable?
4) Who was your most memorable teacher? Why? Please describe them (male, race, etc.)
5) About how many African American male teachers did you have in school (K-12)?
6) How would you rate yourself as a student (K-12)? (short response expected)
7) Were you ever suspended? Why?
8) If you could change anything about your education (K-12), what would you change? Why?
9) What prompted you to enter the teaching profession?
10) If you had an opportunity to redo college, would you still choose teaching? Why or why not?
11) Do you think that you were adequately prepared for this teaching position?
12) What additional preparation do you think is necessary for teachers, particularly black males before entering the teaching profession?
13) Why did you decide to become a teacher? How many years have you been teaching?

14) What grades and what subjects do you teach? Is this your ideal grade and subject? (2 questions)
15) How do you feel about your job here? (Relationships with colleagues, administration, students, parents)
16) What do you like least about your school? What are your least memorable experiences here? Why?
17) Describe your interactions with administration. How do you think they perceive you?
18) What are their hiring practices like? Does it match the demographics of your school? Are they more/less prone to hire African American males? What makes you think this? (4 questions)
19) Describe the school in which you work. What is the ratio of male-female teachers in your school? What is the racial makeup of teachers? Principal? Students?
20) How do you feel about the gender and racial makeup of teachers to students/administrators to teachers?
21) Are there other black male educators in your school? What's the percentage?
22) Does this school actively recruit black male teachers?
23) Is this an ideal place for black males to work?
24) How would you rate your interactions with students? Is there a particular group you feel you have the most impact on? Why do you feel this way?
25) Describe your colleague's interactions with students, particularly black male students. Are the interactions the same or different based on gender and race? Explain

26) Do you think administrators target you for particular jobs/committees because of your gender or race?

27) Why do you think there are so few black male teachers working in public school?

28) How, if at all has being a black male teacher influenced your relationship with your colleagues, students, parents, and the principal?

29) How long do you think you will remain in the teaching profession? Is teaching your ideal job? If another opportunity presented itself, would you take it? Why or why not?

Research Questions:

1) What are your perceptions about supports and restrictions of African American male public school teachers and administrators in New York City K-12 public schools?

The sub-questions are:

2) What were some of the educational supports and barriers you faced growing up in the public school system?

3) What are potential changes that can be made to the teaching profession to support African American male teachers and students?

Appendix E: IRB Approval Letter Department of Education

Department of Education
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Research and Policy Support Group

52 Chambers Street
Room 310
New York, NY 10007

- You are responsible for ensuring that the research is conducted in accordance with your research proposal as approved by the DOE IRB and for the actions of all co-investigators and research staff involved with the research.
- You are responsible for informing all participants (e.g., administrators, teachers, parents, and students) that their participation is strictly voluntary and that there are no consequences for non-participation or withdrawal at any time during the study.
- Researchers must: use the consent forms approved by the DOE IRB; provide all research subjects with copies of their signed forms; maintain signed forms in a secure place for a period of at least three years after study completion; and destroy the forms in accordance with the data disposal plan approved by the IRB.

Mandatory Reporting to the IRB: The principal investigator must report to the Research and Policy Support Group, within five business days, any serious problem, adverse effect, or outcome that occurs with frequency or degree of severity greater than that anticipated. In addition, the principal investigator must report any event or series of events that prompt the temporary or permanent suspension of a research project involving human subjects or any deviations from the approved protocol.

Amendments/Modifications: All amendments/modification of protocols involving human subjects must have prior IRB approval, except those involving the prevention of immediate harm to a subject, which must be reported within 24 hours to the NYC Department of Education IRB.

Continuation of your research: It is your responsibility to insure that an application for continuing review approval is submitted six weeks before the expiration date noted above. If you do not receive approval before the expiration date, all study activities must stop until you receive a new approval letter.

Research findings: We require a copy of the report of findings from the research. Interim reports may also be requested for multi-year studies. Your report should not include identification of the superintendency, district, any school, student, or staff member. Please send an electronic copy of the final report to: irb@schools.nyc.gov.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Mary Mattis at 212.374.3913.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Mary C. Mattis, PhD
Director, Institutional Review Board

cc: Barbara Dworkowitz

Appendix F: IRB approval University of Bridgeport

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

December 19, 2017

Ms. Nadine Sinclair
School of Education
University of Bridgeport

Dear Ms. Sinclair,

On *December 19, 2017* a designated IRB representative determined that your proposed study meets the criteria for exemption:

Type of Review:	*Exemption Determination*
Project Title:	Factors contributing to the declining retention of African American male educators: A phenomenological view of potential implications for African American students
Investigator:	Nadine Sinclair
Exemption:	45 CFR 46.101(b)(2)
Exemption Description:	Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Sincerely,

Christine Hempowicz, Ed.D.
IRB Administrator

CC: Dr. Afrah Richmond

126 Park Avenue • Bridgeport, CT 06604 • Tel: 203.576.4973 • E-mail: irb@bridgeport.edu

Appendix G: Flyer to invite participants to research

Greetings,

*You are invited you to contribute to a study that focuses on the "**Contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education: A Case Study".*** Your participation will give you an opportunity to contribute your voice to the body of research concerning the education of African American students. You can take part by answering questions during three separate interviews at your convenience.

This process is a requirement for the researcher to complete her doctoral studies at the University of Bridgeport. Any information you provide will be confidential. Please note that participation is completely optional.

Let's work together to make a change.

The researcher, Nadine Sinclair is a New York City Department of Education public school teacher. If you are interested in taking part, know someone who may be interested or have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact her at 718.473.6968 or *nsinclair@schools.nyc.gov*.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Appendix H: Principal Approval Letter

Dear Principal,

My name is Nadine Sinclair and I am teacher in the NYCDOE as well as a student at the University of Bridgeport, Connecticut. I am currently completing my doctoral degree and I am recruiting participants', both teachers and administrators from various schools in the Department of Education. This letter is to provide the participant with the information about my study. If the participant is willing to be part of this study, please contact me at 718.473.6968

The following provides all the necessary information related to the research.

- **Research Title:** Contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education: A Case Study
-
- **Principal Investigator:** Nadine Sinclair

- **Subject rights:** This interview involves research, participation is voluntary, *and* that participants may withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.

- **Purpose of the study:** The purpose of this case study is to present the journey of eight experienced past and present teachers of the NYC Department of Education and to understand the school experiences of these African American males as a way to determine the positive and negative impacts their education has on their lives. This study will specifically focus on what led them to pursue and either remain or leave the New York City public K-12 school system. The study will give the participant an opportunity to discuss the plight of the African American male students in public schools. The participant will have an opportunity to address significant issues in creating diversity for Black young men by discussing their experiences in school, their decision to enter and remain in the teaching profession and the implications of adding more African American males as positive role models in the education system.

- **Study tasks or procedures:** If the participant agrees to be in this study, they will be asked to participate in three 60 minute, audio-taped interviews, using a digital recorder. The first phase is to use a case study approach from a phenomenological stance to give the researcher an opportunity to identify successes and barriers relevant their experiences as African American males in the public school system (Creswell, 2009). This interview will be recorded, transcribed and coded for themes. After the process, the audio recording will be available to be heard by the researcher, Ms. Sinclair, personnel from the IRB and the dissertation chair, Dr. Thomas Christ. The recording will be transcribed by Ms. Nadine Sinclair to ensure your privacy.

- **Duration of subject's participation:** If the participant agrees to be in this study, they will be asked to participate in three 60 minute, audio-taped interviews, using a digital recorder.

- **Confidentiality:** Numbers and/or alternate names as opposed to their real names will identify the interviewees. No one will be able to trace the information discussed back to him or her.

After the process, the audio recording will be available to be heard by the researcher, Ms. Sinclair, personnel from the IRB and the dissertation chair, Dr. Thomas Christ. The recording will be transcribed by Ms. Nadine Sinclair to ensure your privacy. The data will be stored in a secure closet on and the transcription will be on a computer, which is solely used by the researcher.

- **Contacts and Questions:**
    - If the participant has any questions, they may contact the principal researcher: Nadine Sinclair can be reached via phone (718) 473-6968 or email nsinclair@psms108.org or Dr. Thomas Christ, the research chair, who can be reached via phone (203) 249-4592 or email tchrist@bridgeport.edu.
    - *For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact the University of Bridgeport's IRB Coordinator at chemp@bridgeport.edu or 203-576-4973.*

- **Incentives:** There are no incentives for participation in this study.

- **Sponsor:** N/A

Contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education: A Case Study

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix I: Permission to Take Part in Human Research Study

Permission to Take Part in a Human Research Study

UB HRP-502 TEMPLATE CONSENT DOCUMENT

1 - Title of research study: Contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education: A case study of possible implications for African American male students

2 - Investigator: Nadine Sinclair

We invite you to take part in a research study because you are an African American male educator with at least 5 years experience.

3 - What you should know about a research study

- Nadine Sinclair will explain this research study to you.
- You volunteer to be in a research study.
- Whether or not you take part is up to you.
- You can choose not to take part in the research study.
- You can agree to take part now and later change your mind.
- Whatever you decide it will not be held against you.
- Feel free to ask all the questions you want before you decide.

4 - Who can I talk to?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, talk to the research team at: Nadine Sinclair, nsinclair@schools.nyc.gov

This research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board. You may talk to the IRB Administrator at (203) 576-4973 or irb@bridgeport.edu for any of the following:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research subject.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

5 - Why are you doing this research?

My name is Nadine Sinclair and I am currently a teacher at the School of Authors and a fourth year doctoral student at the University of Bridgeport working on my dissertation. I am sending you this letter because I would like to interview you as part of my research study exploring *Contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education: A case study of possible implications for African American male students.*

Before agreeing to be part of this study, please read the following:

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to understand the school experiences of African American males from the perspective of African American educators, determine what part of their experiences left positive and negative impacts on their lives and to discover what led them to pursue and remain as educators in the New York City public school system. This study will also give you an opportunity to explore possible reasons for the shortage of African American male educators and ways to make teaching more attractive to them. This study will take part in three phases. Each phase of the qualitative interview will build on each other, asking the participants to reminisce about their childhood memories, their experiences in

school and their experiences as educators. Approaching this from a phenomenological stance will allow the researcher to gain insight and comprehensive descriptions about the participants' experiences (Moustakas, 1994). You will have an opportunity to address significant issues in creating diversity for Black young men by discussing your experiences in school, your decision to enter and remain in the teaching profession and the implications of adding more African American males as positive role models in the education system.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in three 60 minute, audio-taped interviews, using a digital recorder. The first phase is to use a qualitative, phenomenological stance to give the researcher an opportunity to identify prevalent issues relevant your experience as an African American male in the public school system (Creswell, 2009). This interview will be recorded, transcribed and coded for themes. After the process, the audio recording will be available to be heard by the researcher, Ms. Sinclair, personnel from the IRB and the dissertation chair, Ms. Thomas Christ. The recording will be transcribed by Ms. Nadine Sinclair to ensure your privacy.

This consent form provides you with the detailed information of the study. If there is any aspect of the study that you do not understand, I will discuss it with you. Once you understand the study, you will be asked to participate. You have a right to leave this study at any time. Your participation in this study at no time will be solicited or is required.

6 - How long will the research last?

We expect that you will be in this research study for three months beginning in March 2018. During that time, all three interviews will take place in addition to a follow up meeting to confirm your responses. Each interview will last about 60 minutes.

7 - How many people will be studied?

We expect 7 to 10 African American male educators here will be in this research study. We expect that you will be in this research study for 3 months or until the follow-up meeting is completed.

8 - What happens if I say yes, I want to be in this research?

If you agree to be in this study, the researcher will set up three 60 minute, audio-taped interviews. The first phase is to use a qualitative approach from a phenomenological stance to give the researcher an opportunity to identify prevalent issues relevant your experience as an African American male in the public school system (Creswell, 2009). Both interviews will be audiotaped using a digital recorder and you will be allowed to choose a pseudonym to protect your identity. After the researcher transcribes the data from both interviews, a third meeting will be scheduled to confirm the accuracy of your responses. The third meeting should take approximately 25 minutes and will occur within three weeks of the initial interview.

9 - What happens if I say no, I do not want to be in this research?

You may decide not to take part in the research and it will not be held against you.

10 - What happens if I say yes, but I change my mind later?

You agree to take part in the research now. You may stop at any time and it will not be held against you. If you decide to leave the research at any time, contact the investigator so that the interviews will be canceled. If there is any recording, transcription or themes coded

based on your interview the research will immediately destroy all content and will provide you with a copy of your statements.

11 - Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me?

There are no risks to you. Your responses from your interviews will be anonymous.

12 - Will being in this study help me any way?

We cannot promise any benefits to you or others from your taking part in this research. However, possible benefits include understanding your perspective as an African American educator when looking at the contributions to the successes and barriers of African American male educators in K-12 public school education. Your perception about these successes and barriers of African American males in the education system is important to understanding the experiences in school and to try to understand how to build on the positive experiences while deliberately combatting the issues by considering ways to promote an increase in diversity of educators, particularly by investing in training African American males and making becoming an educator more attractive to them.

13 - What happens to the information you collect?

Efforts will be made to limit your personal information, including research study and medical records, to people who have a need to review this information. We cannot promise complete secrecy. Organizations that may inspect and copy your information include the IRB and other representatives of this organization.

14 - Can I be removed from the research without my OK?

The person in charge of the research study or the sponsor can remove you from the research study without your approval. Possible reasons for removal include that the researcher can also end the research study early.

15 - What else do I need to know?

Thank you for your consideration in participating in this study. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me. Nadine Sinclair, nsinclair@schools.nyc.gov.

Chosen Pseudonym: _____

Signature Block for Capable Adult: Long Form

Your signature below documents your permission to take part in this research and to the use and disclosure of your protected health information: ***[Remove latter section if there is no HIPAA authorization]***

DO NOT SIGN THIS FORM AFTER THIS DATE → [ ]

Signature of subject	Date
Printed name of subject	
Signature of person obtaining consent	Date
Printed name of person obtaining consent	Form Date

[Add the following block if you will obtain a witness to the signature (required for all Veterans Administration (VA) research)]

Signature of witness to signature	Date
Printed name of person witnessing signature	

[Add the following block if a witness will observe the consent process (required for the short form of consent documentation)]

My signature below documents that the information in the consent document and any other written information was accurately explained to, and apparently understood by, the subject, and that consent was freely given by the subject.

Signature of witness to consent process	Date
Printed name of person witnessing consent process	

Signature Block for Adult Unable to Consent

Your signature below documents your permission for the subject named below to take part in this research and to the use and disclosure of this person's protected health information: ***[Remove latter section if there is no HIPAA authorization]***

DO NOT SIGN THIS FORM AFTER THIS DATE → [ ]

Signature of subject	Date
Printed name of subject	
Signature of person obtaining consent	Date
Printed name of person obtaining consent	Form Date

Assent

[Add the following block if you will document assent of the subject

- ❑ Obtained
- ❑ Not obtained because the capability of the subject is so limited that the subject cannot reasonably be consulted.

[Add the following block if you will obtain a witness to the signature (required for all Veterans Administration (VA) research)]

Signature of witness to signature	Date
Printed name of person witnessing signature	

[Add the following block if a witness will observe the consent process (required for the short form of consent documentation)]

My signature below documents that the information in the consent document and any other written information was accurately explained to, and apparently understood by, the subject, and that consent was freely given by the subject.

Signature of witness to consent process	Date
Printed name of person witnessing consent process	

Appendix J: Teacher Interview Themes

Teacher Interview Themes

Theme	Code Connected to Theme	Quotation
Additional Preparation/Support	**a. Inadequate preparation**	Absolutely not. Preparation for teachers consists of all of these things called in class where you would actually, you know, do lessons instead of the teacher or, you know, just watching a teacher~Taj
		Um (pause) that doesn't necessarily prepare you for the classroom. What that is is just throwing you into the classroom.~ Taj
		You can have an amazing lesson, but because your students are emotionally off, that whole lesson goes to nothing and it doesn't matter how well you've prepared nor how well you've orchestrated your lesson. If you cannot manage those kids, then a beautiful lesson will go to nothing. So um and this is why a lot of new teachers leave within the first year because they think it's about math or they think it's about their subject matter, but they don't realize that they have kids who have a lot on their mind that they're dealing with, and because, again, the stress of work, of just producing a beautiful lesson plan (laughs) and having all your supplies and having all of these things together is their main number one focus.~Taj
		So I think my undergrad experience did not prepare me in any way for teaching. Actually I wasted my time being there 'cause it wasn't a, I wasn't being an actual practitioner. ~Kareem
		Programs don't prepare you for the classroom. That's just my personal opinion~JNupe
		Um the philosophy aspect of it, but I was not prepared for the population of students that I was going to teach.~John
		I think my colleagues are, as well as myself in the beginning, are just not prepared to work with students from low income, students with disabilities, students with just a ton of problems. And not to their fault, you know?~John
		No. No, I don't think, I don't think, and this is, this is something that I've seen over the years. I don't think that the college teaching curriculum is geared towards success for first year students. They're armed with a wide knowledge base of methodologies and pedagogy, pedagogical themes, but the things that are make or break for a first year teacher, they're not. So flexibility, adaptation or adaptability, working with students on a meaningful level, like not taking it personally. There are

		things that they're not intensively taught, I don't think in my opinion, in, in those systems, and it's literally you get to your first year teaching and it's sink or swim. And after you've invested so many years in learning how to teach, that's, I don't think that's acceptable.~Big Reg
		Um universities don't prepare you for teaching in an urban setting at all, no. I first got my wings, I first started out in the South Bronx. I had a principal, she gave me a notepad and a pencil, and I came in midyear, and she said, "Teach. If you can survive this for two weeks, I'll hire you, I will hire you full time." And I kind of weathered the storm. I was again, back then it was like one of the worst schools in the Bronx.~JNupe
		I think, for one, there needs to be not, not student teaching. I think there needs to be like actual teaching, like workshops, like more workshops or, and I don't know how you can make this um more authentic, but having students, having a representation of the students one might see across the board in the public school system. So year ones all the way your fours, your IEPs, your um (pause) students, your ELLs, like you need (pause) and being able to develop strategies in those labs and settings would allow you to better be able and equipped, be equipped with tools to deal with those things, having not seeing them for the first, I mean your first year. Like your first year, much of that year, if you're not prepared, it's a throwaway year for the kids, and for you, it's, it really like, it puts you in a situation, it makes you question whether or not you've made the right choices. Luckily for me, before I started actual teaching, I was substituting, so a lot of those things were tough for me, but I had, I had those experiences before I got into like actual steady teaching. ~Big Reg
		Like your first year, much of that year, if you're not prepared, it's a throwaway year for the kids, and for you, it's, it really like, it puts you in a situation, it makes you question whether or not you've made the right choices. Luckily for me, before I started actual teaching, I was substituting, so a lot of those things were tough for me, but I had, I had those experiences before I got into like actual steady teaching. ~Big Reg
		Summer school, so I imagine regular, twenty-eight to thirty-two students in a classroom. Of course, you know, the teacher just sat down and, you know, whatever he did was probably grading or something and he just said, Try to teach this lesson.~Dallas
		And I would a hundred percent agree that I was completely uninformed and ill prepared for the classroom.~T'challa
		I can't really tell you how much I actually learned from the program itself, so it just made me think that (pause) it makes me think that I imagine if you had a doctor or a lawyer that had to, that went through the same process

		that, where like you did a summer program or like you only did, you practiced (laughs), you only had to study, you only practiced law for one summer and then have to do multiple internships, or a doctor that didn't have to do understand like the physiology or the, you know, whatever it takes for them to be, whether they're a heart surgeon or brain surgeon, but it was just where they sign up with no vetting system around there~ Focus Group (Baron)
		So like actually like really frontloading what it takes to be an educator and treat them with some type of value, or like what you need to be master of this before you actually enter a classroom, because you actually—that's education malpractice if you go somewhere and don't know what you're doing, right? Because if you go into a doctor's office and you don't have that experience, that's malpractice and you can sue someone.~ Focus Group (T'challa)
Additional Preparation/Support	**b. Secondary Career Choice**	I decided to become a teacher after a career in the private sector. I always wanted to teach and I just saw it as something that was very rewarding, unlike working for salary~Mark
		Um I was coming from a different career path or job, I should say, not a career path. (laughs) And I was looking for something more out of all that I studied. I was in the credit card companies before and that wasn't working out for me, so I decided to go back for my master's, and in doing that, that's when I entered into the teaching aspect.~Taj
		The only time, the first time I thought I would be a teacher was just maybe two weeks before graduation and I was on a train and they had one of those Teaching Fellows commercials, like "You remember your first grade teacher's name? Who's going to remember yours?"~Toure
Finances	**Equitable Compensation**	Then there is the economic aspect, the pay, you know, is just—especially starting out, is really tough, you know, trying to raise a family~Mark
		You know, if you paid more, you'd be attracting—you'd probably have like, I mean you'd probably have more Black people teaching if they had like more money to give, you know?~Toure

		At some point, it's going to be like, hey, you know, you can't be just doing something and I'm not getting money. You have to pay bills, you have to take care of the youth.~Toure
		Think about any other profession, if they started paying doctors less money, you wouldn't have people spending fifteen years through a medical degree and all these residencies to ____ all these great doctors floating to the top, right? It's because of the money why you have top talent.~Toure
		I know my dad didn't graduate from college and I have friends whose parents didn't graduate from college, so I'm also speaking for experience but this is _____ like Black males have a gap between ____ so like when we graduate, like one of the things I wanted was to make money. Like hey (pause) I've worked, I'm first graduate, I want to make money and teaching is not often—teaching oftentimes isn't a field to cash in on.~Kareem
		Or just the fact that they want to make, they want an occupation that makes a lot more money than teaching, okay? In general, right? So I think all those factors are, are barrier.
Finances	**Low-Mid Socio-economic Status**	I grew up poor with a single mother and with one sister and two brothers in the household. And I grew up in Harlem until I was about ten and moved to the Bronx where I did my formative years until I got out of college.~ Mark
		How would you describe your socioeconomic status growing up? Poor. Poor and impoverished.
		Um (pause) coming from a different country, I really didn't understand what socioeconomic status was, but I think looking back and reflecting on my time growing up, I'd say poor to lower middle class at best.
		Absolutely, absolutely. And it's the reason why it's not—why there is a disconnect is because you have teachers who didn't grow up in areas like this. They didn't grow up understanding, again, the, the, the negative uh things that come out of the area that we live in.
		I describe my socioeconomic growing up as living in an underserved community and attending public schools that were underresourced as well, and that's multiple neighborhoods that I lived in.
Finances	**Primary Provider**	But now when you have to take a man who has to work a second job _____ some perception _____ hustle or let me just think about _____ an extra job for money (pause) because people _____ stress or not for stress. You're

		going to leave that and do another stressful job, it's for money.
		Like if you graduate, like most Black males, if you talk about the disparity with high academics, when you graduate you want to make money, right? Because you come from—like you know, I made a joke saying like the typical Black male experience, but the reality of it is is that the majority of Black males are like first generation, second generation graduates.
Meaningful Impact	**Extrinsic Motivation**	I would say that just out of a coincidence, I had a band teacher that, when I was in middle school, and he was a guy who almost took me under his wing.
		And it was his guidance that got me into LaGuardia, so I would have to say him because of that leap into a specialized high school.
		I remember having an elementary school teacher, a Black woman, an African American woman named Miss Daniels, and she was just very caring and very inspiring, and I think I had her either in the fifth grade, fifth or sixth grade, and she stuck out in my head, and she sticks out from that perspective. I had another, another orchestra teacher who was a very dynamic guy also, who was an African American male.
		And then lastly, there—it's a great satisfaction to live in the neighborhood and see my fellow students—my former students and current students. Everybody that teaches knows that when you're a teacher and you're a good teacher, you're a rock star. So I always had, I still have a passion for education, so I just changed, changed my role because I feel like the role that I've transitioned into now is a more impactful role.
		In reference to a similar question previously, like I wouldn't change anything. Um (pause) teaching has afforded me the ability to make a meaningful impact on the lives of students and I don't think there is any better calling. I could have done a lot more and varied things, be more economically advanced, but that's not, that's not (pause) who I am, I guess.
		the most memorable experiences for me would have been um being able to encounter students who had left us to go into high school and eventually um college, and who would come back and who would tell us, like they see why we were a particular way with them, whether it be stern or, or hard on them and really pushing them, or whether it be jovial and, and funny and silly. Having them come back and letting us know that they can make a connection to the next stage of their life, that was always

		really, really interesting.
Meaningful Impact	**Paternal Figure**	Definitely a male figure, father figure. So many young, especially our population, so many young guys who don't have fathers at home or women raising their kids.
		Um even parents, like you know, they're more open and honest with me in what they don't have in their home, and like seeing me as like a father figure to their son or daughter, you know, helps them (pause) helps them better educate themselves and their, and their children. So it's, honestly it's been, it's been a blessing.
		I work in a community where there's a lack of fathers in the household. And I think that hiring these African American males would be a great plus in that community.
		So I—these males could kind of play that role, not the father role, but just that missing aspect of the home.
		I can pretty much tell which students have a male figure in the house.
		So anything from father figure, adversary, my boys vary so much. Like my boys in middle school and upper elementary, fifth grade, they will challenge me in everything.
		Some areas that others can't see, I can see, especially when you know that a kid is living in a shelter or they live in the 'hood, and you know how to relate to them or you can help—once they get on the inside of this building, you become a father figure, you become an uncle. You know, you become a mentor and you help them grow and you can help them in other aspects of their life to help change.
		Um a lot of them are—come from single-parent homes, so when they get here, I treat them as if they're my child and we have that relationship as if, you know, I'm their father. I give them advice, you know, I talk to them about working, I talk to them about being their best.
Meaningful Impact	**Role Model/Mentor**	I always wanted to teach. I, I've had a history of sports and working, when I went to college working with Boys and Girls Club. And mentoring younger guys behind me in the neighborhood. And so I always had this inclination to be a leader and a teacher.
		It's a passion. I say to the kids, when you look at what you're going to do as a career, you want to have a career where you would pay somebody to do that, what you're

		doing.
		And then the other perspective is as a, as a mentor, as a kind of like a big brother or (pause) just a teacher, you know, you know, I can help you see things if you're willing to show—look at what I'm showing you, you know?
		Like trying to bring like compassion with those things. So I really tried to tap into like their, their—like them, not just like, just like (pause) I believe in instruction, like instruction is important.
		I think that I would want more—now I think I would want more Black educators educating me 'cause even in these questions, I realize the subconscious influence that they had on me even getting into education or how they had like just some sort of efficacy towards like being—not efficacy but being passionate towards, caring about me, like Black educators, even though they were very strict, I've always—they were indicators of them just showing us like sense of caring. And then I also probably would have went to a better elementary school to build stronger foundational skills.
		There is always a new group of students that need you.
		Most memorable experience. (long pause) I have a (pause) last year I had a kindergarten student (laughs) in phys ed and she's a tiny little thing. And she's full of energy and she's loads of fun and she's articulate and she tries really hard, and after class one day, the end, the end of the day, her parents came to me and they said, "What did you do?" "What are you talking about?" They said, "This girl is going on about she wants to be a physical education teacher!" (laughs) So (laughs) and that was really awesome.
		In the, in the lower grades, it's really a teacher-mentor and early on
		Yes. And those would be the ones who are impacted by gangs and gang initiations and uh those who have been victims of gang violence. You know, I have a bigger impact, a bigger relationship with them because, one, I do gang training and I do that every single year. Once a year, I take a gang training through the DOE so I'm able to identify gang signs, gang tags, the clothing, the music and everything. So because I have that training, I can identify when they are affected by it and I'm able to help them either get out or um navigate their way to eventually get out.
		The most memorable teacher wasn't because he was this great instructor. I think it was because I saw myself in him.

		So with parents, I had a—this is T'Challa—I had a, if it's one thing I can definitively say, I've had great relationships with parents. I believe they were happy to see someone who looked like their child in front of them, or even just a Black man because that's an ongoing conversation that they would always just mention.
		For the most part, I think students saw us as brothers, uncles, dads, so there was always this natural camaraderie that we have with students where they enjoyed being in science class and we also had like this informal way that we would kind of talk, so like kids felt comfortable with just having outside, maybe not related to academic content with myself.
		I would say—this is Dallas again. I have a good rapport with the parents and with the students, again, likewise in the way that, you know, they were quite pleasant and pleased to see another man of color inside a position of authority.
		I went in there with a mission to (pause) you know, help turn boys of color in particular to reach their potential.
Systematic **Structures**	**Hiring Practices**	And she hired me on the spot because of the recommendation from this other person. And at that time when I started, which was about sixteen years ago, the program was still in place to give you five years to get your degree.
		My principal hired me because I came very highly recommended by a very strong administrator in District Thirteen.
		So are they more or less prone to hire African American males? I would say yes if they were available, but I have not, over the years, seen a lot of African American males that have been hired.
		So it's not as if I've seen African American males come in here to interview and we didn't hire them. They just—we just haven't seen them.
		I: I think before we do that, thinking about: Are they more or less prone to hire African American males? T: I would say less prone.
		So what I'm saying is that maybe Black administrators are more like reactive and mindful about trying to hire some Black teachers who, as I said, would reflect the demographics of the students, reflect the demographics of the neighborhood where the school is, and just give some Black people opportunities as(?) um Black or White

		administrators.
		Because I also served at a school, and that school for like a year and a half was also a White principal, where that was really a concern of where it was like noticed that _____ for ____ of time mainly White people. So year, so as a—so the long and short of it is the hiring practices more reflect the principal's idea more than just like the demographics of the students.
		You want the kids to have good teachers. But it should reflect as I see it like people from the community, and it makes a big difference. The ___ last school I taught at, it was a school in my neighborhood. ____ the kids were ____ outside school and like I understand the experiences the kids are having in the neighborhood, you know, also having similar upbringing to a lot of these kids, and it does make a difference compared to like just hiring somebody from a ____ where we have grown up in like a suburb _____ or had a whole different school experience themselves, you know?
		And I think I was hired because I probably knew how to work well with bad kids, kids that were considered behavioral problems. So that's probably why I was hired.
		Sorry. It was like, it was just these people, they were (laughs) (pause) there were teachers that were hired were not from the neighborhood, were not even from the borough. Um (pause) she would hire them without creating a hiring team, so she was making these decisions in isolation, with either maybe another AP, so like she hired a White AP that didn't match the demographic or wasn't—didn't match the demographic or reflective of the population, and the thing about it which was unfortunate is that because things didn't work and the turnover rate of teachers was so high, it was almost like she was forced to start hiring more people of color and wasn't doing that from the beginning. So it wasn't like listening to other people's advice. It was just teachers keep leaving.
		they've said to me that the administration, they've had issues with hiring African American males as in they don't. And when they do, um they usually tend to give them a hard time.
Systematic **Structures**	**Imbalance Staff/Less** **African American Males**	I really don't remember having African American male teachers.

		They were either phys ed teachers, um it was mostly women. Very few males in general in the classroom.
		So there are some teachers who have good rapports with our students, especially the Black males in here. I'm going to say there's, I'd say there's four or five of us. (pause) I'll say that three of us are pretty good, and then the other two struggle a little bit.
		You know, I think that first, I think there's this stereotype that teachers were always women, and that goes all the way back. I mean, they're always—guys always shad female teachers.
		About how many African American male teachers did you have in school from K to twelve? I would (long pause) I would probably have to say three (pause) that I can truly recall.
		I: Are there more female than male teachers? T: I would yes, there are more female than male.
		T: There are four African American males. I: And how many people are on your staff? T: Um (pause) there's probably over a hundred and fifty teachers.
		And it didn't even have to just be Black men, but we needed more men in this space to (pause) and as time progressed, through the poor retention of teachers, eventually it was like this is the specific candidate that we're looking for, so more, more males came on board as time progressed, but it was mostly, I would say, let's say (pause) for every ten teachers, there were about (pause) three or four males, so thirty to forty percent, which is actually not bad in terms of if you look at the general scope of education. If you can get a staff to have at least thirty to forty percent males, that's actually pretty good.
		so I would say approximately maybe ten that I can think of, maybe ten. And relative to the ratio, we clearly have far more female teachers, like that's not even close.
		I am always going to advocate for more males in the school. So having approximately ten males in the building is far more than I've seen in this school, other schools that I've taught at. However, it's not nearly enough.
		In addition to that, I mean systemically, where are the avenues for Black males to get to become a teacher?
		I think, for one, there needs to be not, not student teaching. I think there needs to be like actual teaching, like workshops, like more workshops or, and I don't know how you can make this um more authentic, but

		having students, having a representation of the students one might see across the board in the public school system. I think there needs to be like actual teaching, like workshops, like more workshops or, and I don't know how you can make this um more authentic, but having students, having a representation of the students one might see across the board in the public school system.
		I mean, first of all, (pause) some, some (pause) group of people decided a very long time ago that in order for you to be served (pause) adequately, you need appropriate representation. So if there is, across the board, if there is a hiring practice in a school of a particular demographic of kids and the staff does not meaningfully represent what those kids look like, there is usually—let me not say usually, but there tends to be a certain disconnect and/or wall of distrust, which teachers have to work extra hard to try to overcome and students are extra reserved because they're not used to a certain group.
		The only Black male educators were my brother and I. (pause) And then maybe like two years later, they hired another science guy and then a year later, another math guy who was Black. So just, I mean, we had to advocate just for people of color in general.
		I think the Black male has been traumatized from being in the public school system that if you operate from a place of trauma, you don't wanna go back to that place 'cause if you think about like the high suspension rates and like targeting and over-policing of Black males in school. I'm not talking about outside the institute, I'm talking about in school itself.
Systematic **Structures**	**Inclusion/Additional** **Representation**	The ___ last school I taught at, it was a school in my neighborhood. ____ the kids were ____ outside school and like I understand the experiences the kids are having in the neighborhood, you know, also having similar upbringing to a lot of these kids, and it does make a difference compared to like just hiring somebody from a ____ where we have grown up in like a suburb _____ or had a whole different school experience themselves, you know? So you'd be doing just trying to find a balance, you know? I say it's not possible that only teachers come from the neighborhood, but some people are not even mindful of being very selective _____ covered our representation.
		Well, you know, as I said earlier there's just a pool that they choose from that is only so big, you know? So maybe the problem is just not (pause) maybe it has to do with like how can you make a different demographic of people into the pool? Because there's not only the demographic _____. It's not only _____ race and gender but (pause) it's also about like the educational skills of the people in this pool because once you have that pool,

		you can only select from it. You know, ____ a pool is just mainly, mostly White, mostly females, and then yeah, you're going to have like mostly White and mostly female
		However, in a broader sense, I would, I would like to see more representation of African American males especially in the public school system. I think there are a lot of males who don't see themselves represented and are, whether accurately or inaccurately, they tend to be misunderstood.
		I think, for one, there needs to be not, not student teaching. I think there needs to be like actual teaching, like workshops, like more workshops or, and I don't know how you can make this um more authentic, but having students, having a representation of the students one might see across the board in the public school system.
		I mean, first of all, (pause) some, some (pause) group of people decided a very long time ago that in order for you to be served (pause) adequately, you need appropriate representation. So if there is, across the board, if there is a hiring practice in a school of a particular demographic of kids and the staff does not meaningfully represent what those kids look like, there is usually—let me not say usually, but there tends to be a certain disconnect and/or wall of distrust, which teachers have to work extra hard to try to overcome and students are extra reserved because they're not used to a certain group.
		I think that if we are serious about getting more Black male teachers into the classroom, there needs to be concerted effort first around budgeting for these preparation programs. So for instance, we should treat it similar to like a medical field where one (pause) Black males are doing some apprenticeship at the schools that they may particularly be entering or _____ populations that are similar, and longer apprenticeships too.

Appendix K: Principal Interview Themes

Principal Interview Themes

Theme	Code Connected to the Theme	Quotation
Additional Preparation/Support	**Inadequate Preparation**	Maybe in schools, when they're in college, do you think they're adequately prepared? I don't think so. I think if a person was looking to be in a profession, I don't think having a semester or two of student teaching is enough. I think at least two to three years of student teaching to see how their skills are being developed, and to see how they're impacting. I don't think that having a half a year or a year is enough because in that year, you have to—you don't have much to compare it to.~DJ
Additional Preparation/Support	**Secondary Career Choice**	I think as I mentioned the last time that we met, it was almost out of accident, it was almost like I was the accident to teaching because of a different goal, at least a career goal. I ended up in the field of teaching, I wanted to basically teach college math, I wanted to be a professor and in order to do that, I know I needed more education so I had to go back to school~Peter
Equitable Compensation	**Equitable Compensation**	I think most people desire to make a lot of money in life and they've been told for so many years that educators don't make a lot of money, so why would I aspire to do something that's not going to make me rich? And that's what young people have a mindset of.
		If we went to college, we went to college to make a lot of money, so whether it's to become a lawyer, a doctor, you'll find more Black males in those other areas, but still when you, when you factor in the percentage, it's still the same. There's probably the same percentage of Black male lawyers as there are Black male teachers.
		It's every major, it's every major profession that makes a lot of money. You can go to Fortune 500 companies, you can go to, I don't care, you can go to (pause) a place like Morgan Stanley.
		You can monetize your skill set and there aren't enough people to kind of buy it(?). So why would a child or a young person decide they want to do that? You know what I'm saying? You know, (pause) I don't, I don't remember what making thirty, forty thousand dollars

		was. I haven't made that in over fifteen years. So, but I can tell you, if I did make thirty, forty thousand, I'd be miserable.
		I came, you know, as you get further and further along, you kind of reach that interval and you think of your career, you think of a way in which to monetize your strengths and your desires. And so I wouldn't change anything because as I said, I've seen the impact that I've made, I've seen the impact it has made on my life, I've seen the impact that I've made on other people's lives, and that's actually kind of like the driving force in my life at this point.
Equitable Compensation	**Low-Mid Socio-economic status**	We lived in multiple homes, but you know, as I've gotten older and started to understand what middle class was, financially I would redefine it and say we were probably more on the upper lower class because financially, we weren't, we weren't living, we didn't really have a lot of money. We had, my parents made sure that it appeared that way, but we didn't really have a lot of money.
		And again, to go back to why being—I realized that I wasn't really middle class was because my parents didn't really have money to send us for Hofstra. Like the scholarship was the funds, and it was promised for the second year, but by then ___ wasn't really even prepared to handle the first year.
		How would you describe your socio-economic status growing up? P: I would describe it as poor.
		They know I believe wholeheartedly that ALL students can learn in spite of their upbringings, and their socio-economic status, in spite of their race
Equitable Compensation	**Primary Provider**	And I think people don't look at it as lucrative. I think most people desire to make a lot of money in life and they've been told for so many years that educators don't make a lot of money, so why would I aspire to do something that's not going to make me rich? And that's what young people have a mindset of. I wanna do what makes me rich.
		I can't be, I can't do something twenty years to make, you know, a little less than a hundred thousand. I need to make enough.

		I just knew, I just wanted to be like my Pops, get up in the morning and go to work, take care of my family, live in a house, go on vacations and stuff like that.
Meaningful Impact	**Extrinsic Motivation**	I learned his passion and how much he loved what he did. So it became a desire of mine to be just as impactful and influential as he was.
		Like I knew where, I saw enough of it and I had a passion, so I—not only did I go see his class, but I went to go see other people's classrooms as well. So it's funny how it comes full circle because when I was a principal, Mr.
		It comes easy to me because it's a passion and because I'm always learning. But I'm one of those people, I attribute a lot of my knowledge to, I think, the path that God placed me on.
Meaningful Impact	**Paternal Figure**	I learned his passion and how much he loved what he did. So it became a desire of mine to be just as impactful and influential as he was.
Meaningful Impact	**Role Model/Mentor**	You know, I think that they don't have the necessary, the necessary role models or mentors to walk them through that process. I think just like everybody else, they become discouraged when they don't see the light at the end of the tunnel.
		I gave him the requirements. (pause) Mr. C. went, got a teaching certification, got his bachelor's, got his teaching certification, became a literacy math coach, he's now an assistant principal in Mount Vernon. And on top of that, I'm also a college professor, and I was teaching a school district leadership course, and who ends up being in my class but Mr. C. So he's able, I'm able to look at him and say, here's an example of what I molded from the ground up, and I see the impact it has made.
		But because not only did I run the gamut and I became a school leader as a Black male, so I became that influence that they saw that they can attain to be, and I didn't sugarcoat anything. I shared with them how hard it was, I shared with them that it can be possible. But I also shared with them the glory that comes along with it, which is you've made a huge impact as a Black male in a Black

		community.
		So I think a lot of it is, you know, whether I want to be a rapper 'cause I see more rap, I listen to more rap. I want to be LeBron James because I watch it a lot on TV. So there isn't enough, I think, by way of role model images of, of Black educators that makes somebody want to be that. And I think people don't look at it as lucrative.
		And that's where young people's minds are right now, is that they need somebody that can relate to them. You know, and not somebody who's not willing to understand mumble rap.
		The males in general but the African American males to a large degree because they get to see another Black man come to work everyday in a shirt and tie and that Black man runs the show. It's a uniform school and I think when they come around me the same kids who may let their pants sag a little bit may pull it up on their waist and they like to look neat.
Systematic **Structures**	**Hiring Practices**	Yes, and you know what's really crazy about that? Um during the hiring process, there weren't a lot of them available. I wasn't getting a lot of resumes. However, I came up with what I thought probably the most important contribution I made as a principal, is I hired many school aides for the teaching assistant.
		We call them TAs, TAs, and most of them were males, Black males, males of color. And what was important to me was the scarcity of them in the workforce by way of resumes told me it doesn't have to be that way and have to stay that way. So if I hired them as TAs under the premise that I say to them, "The one, there's a couple of requirements I have. One, that you have to wear a shirt and tie every day. And two, that you're willing to go back to school." And every last one of them took me up on that
		So I realize that because they aren't out there, it doesn't mean that you limit yourself to saying, oh, there's just no Black male teachers. But there's Black males in your community. What are you doing to recruit them into your school or into the workforce to then give them—You become what you see. If you've never seen a Black male in education, why would you desire to be one?
		But now we have a teacher shortage and so being a minority really stands out. But it's more than just us. It's a profession ____ because whether you're in Oklahoma, in Chicago and other places where right now they're

		operating with not enough teachers, that says to me that it's ____ than African American males. It's a bigger problem with teaching and how it's become less desirable to become a teacher.
Systematic **Structures**	**Imbalance Staff/Less** **African American Males**	And the numbers won't really go above that because males in particular just don't seek those type of jobs, and we've never sought this type of jobs. If we went to college, we went to college to make a lot of money, so whether it's to become a lawyer, a doctor, you'll find more Black males in those other areas, but still when you, when you factor in the percentage, it's still the same.
		But now we have a teacher shortage and so being a minority really stands out. But it's more than just us. It's a profession ____ because whether you're in Oklahoma, in Chicago and other places where right now they're operating with not enough teachers, that says to me that it's ____ than African American males. It's a bigger problem with teaching and how it's become less desirable to become a teacher.
		We're losing, we're losing generations of teachers of all ethnicities because of it being less, less glamorous and I think that when—being Black males have always been a minority, when the pool shrinks, it's going to look even worse for them. I think we've ever had a (pause) an abundance of male, Black male teachers ever.
		So I think that the reality behind it is that we make enough excuses about why they're not here and not enough, and not enough effort to correct it by bringing them into the schools, even at the lowest level of school aide, teaching assistant, something like that. And then staying on them and continue to measure them throughout the process.
Systematic **Structures**	**Inclusion/Additional** **Representation**	I think just like everybody else, they become discouraged when they don't see the light at the end of the tunnel. And there's not enough people to sit down and to basically mentor you and to tell you what's out there and what's better than what you can do after.
		I think it's more (pause) you become what you see most of, what you see most of in your community, you know? Most prominent Black males move out of the community after they reach a certain status anyway, so what does a young person have to look towards being?